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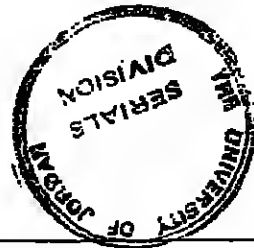
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THE TIMES



No. 64,860

MONDAY JANUARY 24 1994

Clarke warned of votes threat

Worried Tory MPs demand lower taxes

By PHILIP WEBSTER
POLITICAL EDITOR

KENNETH Clarke last night faced anxious demands from Conservative MPs for tough new public spending cuts to salvage the Tories' reputation as the party of low taxation.

Treasury admissions that the average family's tax burden is about to become greater than it was under Labour in 1979 provoked a wave of concern among party activists who fear the impact on local and European elections.

In spite of his fierce defence of the past two Budgets, the Chancellor was given blunt warnings that he and the Government would pay a heavy price unless the policy was swiftly reversed.

Mr Clarke said that no responsible Chancellor could say that taxes never went up, but what I can say is that taxes will always be lower under me than they would be if you replaced me with either a Labour or a Liberal Chancellor.

His claims were challenged by a Liberal MP, who said that the decision by Labour to cut

Tory activists fear that tax rises from the two 1993 Budgets will cause the party irreparable damage when it has to face the voters later this year

Brown, the shadow Chancellor, said the Conservatives were "making the biggest tax demands in history".

More alarmingly for Mr Clarke, senior Conservatives warned that the Government's low-tax, pro-family credentials were under grave threat. One 1992 Committee executive member said: "This is far more damaging to us than all the scandals. This will be remembered by our natural supporters long after the recent ministerial resignations have been forgotten."

With Tory MPs across the political spectrum voicing worries, there were signs that many were ready for a return of the internal party battle last summer over the balance between tax rises and spending cuts. The party's 1993 budget deficit

John Townsend, chairman of the Conservative backbench finance committee, said: "From now on all the emphasis must be on cutting expenditure. It is absolutely imperative to get taxes down. The spending ministers said last summer that it would be more politically damaging to cut spending rather than put up taxes. Now the chickens are coming home to roost. We have got to start pulling these increases back. If we lose our claim to be the party of low taxation, we lose a critical electoral asset."

The Reigate MP Sir George Gardiner agreed: "The British public expects the Tories to cut taxes. Unless the government gets back on this track we will pay a heavy price."

Party officials are expected to prepare briefs for Tory MPs backing Mr Clarke's assertion yesterday that comparisons with the last year of a Labour Government are misleading. But the Government has been put under renewed pressure by its own figures, teased out through a series of Commons questions by Harriet Harman, the shadow Treasury Chief Secretary. One calculation shows that the typical family will pay an extra £12.50 a week in tax from April.

Mr Clarke, interviewed on BBC's *Breakfast with Frost* programme, said: "At the very end of the Labour Government they did actually get tax down below where we are at the moment, but that was one of the most irresponsible things that Denis Healey did in the run-up to the election."

In ordinary circumstances, Conservatives always have lower tax than Labour would have in the same circumstances. He added: "And if you had a Labour Chancellor now, taxes would be much, much higher - if you believe what they say about wanting to spend a lot more public money, as they frequently do."

The storm, two days before another Commons vote on VAT on fuel, was set off by the Treasury disclosure that a couple with two children on average male earnings will pay 21.9 per cent of their income in tax and national insurance from April, compared with 20.9 per cent in 1979.

But Mr Brown released new figures which he said proved that the tax take would rise every year under the Tories to 1998-9, increasing to 38.5 per cent of income - more, he said, than in any year of Labour government.

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Esma Brkovic, right, and a friend lay flowers where mortars killed her children

Fine-cheat drivers to be clamped

By MARGARET CURRIEY

MOTORISTS who park on yellow lines persistently and fail to pay outstanding penalty tickets will find their vehicles recognised by a hand-held computer and immediately clamped under a new scheme to be tested by traffic wardens in Croydon, south London.

The computers will record registration numbers and print tickets automatically for vehicles parked illegally. But they can also carry a "hot list" of number plates of regular offenders.

The scheme is similar to that used in Los Angeles: if a warden finds a vehicle on the computer it is clamped rather than being given a ticket. The driver might not get their vehicle back until outstanding fines are paid.

Eventually, a radio link to the DVLC licensing authority in Swansea could allow instant access to details of offending vehicles anywhere in Britain.

Read tax boost? page 10

High Court faces judges shortage

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

AN unprecedented shortage of High Court judges has been compounded by the failure of Lloyd's names to settle their disputes out of court. There will shortly be just one judge available to handle all disputes in the High Court Queen's Bench division.

The crisis, described as "dire" by the High Court judge in charge of listing, has been worsening in recent months, with record numbers of senior barristers and circuit judges being used to keep abreast of the large numbers of complex High Court disputes. Senior judges are considering an approach to the Lord Chancellor for a "temporary uplift" in numbers, perhaps by bringing forward next year's appointments of High Court judges.

Mr Justice Seville, the judge in charge of the commercial court, has predicted that impending Lloyd's litigation could occupy the High Court commercial judges for the next five years. Last week the acute problem suffered a further setback when two groups of

names pursuing litigation against Lloyd's of London - Gooda Walker and Fehrm - voted overwhelmingly to reject settlement offers.

At the same time, the Lord Chief Justice's determination to clear the backlog of criminal appeals means that for the first time from this summer a record six divisions of the Court of Appeal criminal division will be sitting.

Mr Justice Otton, the judge in charge of the non-jury list in the Queen's Bench division, said the Lloyd's decisions would "undoubtedly add strain to an already stretched system".

The normal complement of High Court judges available for Queen's Bench work is 24. But huge backlogs, not only in criminal appeals but also in judicial review work, are absorbing much judicial manpower. An extra divisional court is also being set up to tackle the backlog in judicial review cases. It is now taking up to 18 months for people to obtain a full hearing in cases. Continued on page 2, col 6

Muslims call for Nato air strikes on Serb gunners

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

BOSNIAN Muslims yesterday called on Nato to launch air strikes against Serb positions above Sarajevo, the capital. At the same time the outgoing United Nations commander attacked his UN political masters bitterly for creating "a crisis of confidence and purpose" in the country.

The appeal for air strikes came from Haris Silajdzic, the Bosnian Prime Minister, after six children were killed in a mortar attack only a few hundred yards from the UN Protection Force headquarters in Sarajevo on Saturday. Bosnian Serb commanders deny having fired the shells.

In a letter to Boutros Boutros Ghali, the UN Secretary-General, also sent to Manfred Wörner, Nato's Secretary-General, Mr Silajdzic demanded: "What more must happen before UN resolutions are implemented?" Ejup Ganic, the Bosnian Vice-President, also called for air strikes in a letter to President Clinton. At the Nato summit this month, Mr Clinton backed the use of air power.

Lieutenant General Francis Briquemont, the Belgian commander of the 12,000 UN troops in Bosnia, who is leaving through exhaustion, said yesterday that politicians were denying UN troops the means to carry out their mission. In an angry parting shot, he said: "There is a fantastic crisis now because the politicians are writing and voting I don't know how many resolutions, but we have no means to execute them."

Speaking after a farewell reception given by the Bosnian government before he hands over his command today to Lieutenant General Sir Michael Rose, a former SAS chief, General Briquemont said: "You cannot solve Bosnia's problem only with resolutions, but with action, and for action

you need the means to conduct it." He also called for a reassessment of the UN civilian chain of command, which was preventing Uprofor from reacting quickly to attacks by warring factions.

Warren Christopher, the American Secretary of State, said yesterday that he was confused about France's position on further military action in Bosnia. "I don't know what the French have in mind. They seem to have some new ideas," he said. Mr Christopher is to meet Alain Juppé, the French Foreign Minister, in Paris today. Mr Juppé has been consulting European Union partners and urging a new initiative in Bosnia.

The Pope, in a speech on the Roman Catholic Church's international day of prayer for Bosnia, edged towards support for military intervention to stop the bloodshed. A senior Vatican source said the Pope would support "precise, proportionate and perhaps demonstrative" military action to stop aggression if all else failed.

Malcolm Rifkind, the Defence Secretary, said yesterday that there was a reluctance to use air strikes because it would mark "a fundamental change" in UN strategy in Bosnia and halt the humanitarian aid mission. Asked about possible withdrawal of British troops, he admitted that a pullout would lead to more civilian deaths.

However, interviewed on London Weekend Television's *Walden* programme, Mr Rifkind said: "If we came to the aid but under a judgment that the UN presence was actually prolonging the war, then obviously the course of action we would have to follow would then become much clearer."

Britain in charge, page 13

Mortgages will increase as well

By ANATOLE KALETSKY, ECONOMICS EDITOR

MOST home owners will face higher mortgage bills from April, despite the half-point cut in interest rates announced just before Kenneth Clarke's Budget. The extra mortgage payments, of between £1 and £1.50 weekly, will come on top of the steep rise in tax payments, which the Treasury admitted over the weekend would cost a typical family up to £12.50 a week.

According to Halifax Building Society, the country's biggest mortgage lender, a typical borrower's monthly payments will go up by about £5 in April.

Calculations by *The Times* show that all home owners with mortgages of less than £36,700 will have to pay more than they do now. But many families with larger mortgages will also find their bills rising because of the way the Government's reduction in mortgage tax relief interacts with lenders' charging methods.

The only group that will not see payments rise in April will be those with mortgages of more than £36,700 on a variable interest rate that is reviewed annually.

Payments will be going up because mortgage tax relief will be reduced from 25 to 20 per cent. This will add £143 a year, or £12 a month, to the

income tax bill of any household with a mortgage of £30,000 or more. Because of the system of mortgage interest relief at source (MIRAS) used by most lenders, the increase will appear as an higher mortgage payments than as a rise in taxes.

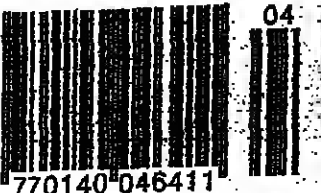
For borrowers with large mortgages, the cut in interest rates last November will more than offset the cut in tax relief. Most building societies have reduced their mortgage rates by around 0.35 percentage points in response to November's half-point cut in base rates. Typically, the crossover point between gainers and losers will be around £37,000.

But borrowers on fixed-interest loans will not benefit from November's rate cut, while they will suffer from lower tax relief. Borrowers whose payments are adjusted monthly have already enjoyed the reduction and will therefore see their bills rise again in April. Thus it will only be large borrowers on annually-adjustable schemes who see any reduction in mortgage payments in April.

In comparing the tax burden imposed by the 1993 budgets with the tax system under Labour, the Treasury has omitted the impact of mortgage tax relief. However, the reduction in MIRAS has had more impact on family budgets than any other change in Britain's tax structure since the 1970s.

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Brian Redhead, voice of the morning, dies at 64

By JENNY KNIGHT



Redhead: tributes to his "passionate concern"

BRIAN Redhead, the veteran broadcaster, died last night after treatment for cancer of the stomach. He was 64. There were warm tributes from leaders of all political parties, despite the abrasive treatment he gave many politicians during his 18 years presenting the early morning *Radio 4 Today* programme.

Mr Redhead's wife Jenny and daughter Abigail were with him when he died at Macclesfield District General Hospital. He had been due to leave the *Today* programme in March to concentrate on his role as Chancellor of Manchester University.

The Prime Minister led the tributes, saying: "Brian's achievements as a journalist and broadcaster will live on

long after him. I shall remember him for his feisty interviewing style and the ever-present twinkle in his eye."

John Smith, Leader of the Labour Party, said: "Brian Redhead was a superb radio broadcaster. He became a much-loved British institution. His expertise was formidable and his standards impeccable."

For the Liberal Democrats, Paddy Ashdown said: "Many will feel Britain has lost its voice of the morning. We shall begin our days less informed, less educated and less entertained."

Baroness Thatcher said: "We shall miss his robust interviews which always demonstrated his loyalty to his roots, and to his beliefs and his loyalty to a free society. The breadth and depth of his knowledge were quite outstanding, and

whether in opposition or in government I always enjoyed being interviewed by him." Neil Kinnock, the former Labour Leader, said Mr Redhead was "the cream of broadcasters... a sworn enemy of pomposity and hypocrisy, a true friend of independence and integrity."

The BBC's director-general, John Birt, said that Mr Redhead's broadcasting "was constantly illuminated by his passionate concern to explore what lay beneath events and issues."

A number of controversies marked Mr Redhead's years on *Today*. The BBC apologised to the Government after he said, about unemployment: "We know the figures are massaged."

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THOMAS PINK
SHIRTMAKER LONDON

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Curbs on sickness benefit may add 250,000 names to jobless register

By Alice Thomson
POLITICAL REPORTER

THE jobless total could increase by a quarter of a million because of plans to replace sickness and invalidity benefit, according to statistics which ministers are now studying.

Unofficial estimates at the Department of Social Security show that at least 200,000 people could be added to the unemployment register if they do not pass the more stringent medical test under the proposed incapacity benefit introduced by Kenneth Clarke in his November Budget.

The Social Security (Incapacity for Work) Bill, which will have its second reading today in the House of Commons, is expected to become more contentious than the Criminal Justice Bill and the Finance Bill.

The DSS is now faced with the prospect of an alarming increase in the unemployed or of massaging the unemployment figures to give a rosier picture.

The Bill was introduced to try to curb the numbers of people applying for invalidity benefit. Those have tripled from 500,000 in 1976 to 1.5 million in 1992. At the Conservative Party conference last year John Major said "it beggars belief" that so many people could have become invalids during a period when health and life expectancy are generally improving.

The problem with the theory that the increase is largely due to fraudulent claims is that it does not appear to be borne out by available research, including that done by Peter's Lilley's own department.

In 1990, Sir Michael Partridge, the DSS's permanent secretary, told the House of Commons public accounts committee that the two principal reasons were prolonged unemployment, which had an adverse effect on individuals' health, and the move to community care.

Donald Dewar, shadow So-



Three faces of Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as he parried questions on *Breakfast with Frost* yesterday

cial Security Secretary, said last night: "This is a determined attempt to save money for the Treasury and nothing to do with dealing with the long-term sick."

The National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux, which is fighting the Bill, said the tighter rules would mainly affect people whose disabilities were intermittent or who were mentally ill. Many who no longer qualified for incapacity benefit would be unable to find work and would find it increasingly difficult to satisfy the qualifying conditions for unemployment benefit.

Ann Abraham, chief executive of the association, said: "We are already being inundated by sick and disabled people who are being denied invalidity benefit wrongly. On

one day the CAB in the West Midlands represented at eight invalidity benefit cut-off tribunals and won seven. Most appeals are successful but make for untold anxiety and hardship among the most vulnerable in our society."

John Smith has set up an internal Labour enquiry into social policy, increasing speculation that he is about to reject any proposals for tampering with universal state benefits.

The Labour leader is reported by close colleagues to be opposed to the means-testing of child benefit, one of the proposals being considered by the Commission on Social Justice under Sir Gordon Borrie. The Labour enquiry will be headed by David Blunkett, the shadow Health Secretary, and Ann Taylor, the

shadow Education Secretary. Mr Smith has always said that he would not be bound by the commission's findings and that there would be a separate party enquiry covering social benefit issues. Now he has decided not to wait for the final report from the commission before going ahead with that.

The move will make it easier for Mr Smith to turn down electorally unpalatable recommendations from the commission. There are serious doubts among Labour backbenchers whether the commission can produce the properly costed and tough policies on tax and benefits that will be needed to withstand the heat of an election campaign.

Tory Party chairmen, local activists and agents are increasingly concerned they are no longer considered the party of low taxation and the family. They are worried that while the May local elections could be demoralising for party workers, the effect could be catastrophic after the European elections in June.

Although on the record most are prepared to support the Prime Minister, if not the actual tax increases, when speaking privately many voice serious concern about the Government and say that they have already written off the European elections.

One loyal London activist said: "The thought of increased taxes was the one thing that prevented people voting Labour at the General Election. Now our last prop has disappeared."

"We have lost the family, law and order, defence and the moral high ground. The one thing left they have just thrown away. When you go out and canvass you are hampered by the fact that everyone thinks the Prime Minister is a slippery liar."

A West Midlands chairman said: "Although Kenneth Clarke is just as responsible, many will see it as the new stick with which to beat John Major. We have no obvious replacement, so I just hope we can stick together."

Daniel Moylan, chairman of Kensington and Chelsea Conservatives, said: "I understand the need for fiscal balance but it is public expenditure that we should be rigorously reviewing."

Leading article, page 17

Adams says republicans undivided over peace

By Philip Webster
POLITICAL EDITOR

GERRY Adams, the President of Sinn Féin, insisted yesterday that the Anglo-Irish peace process had reached a critical phase but denied that the republican movement was split over it.

Republican and nationalist leaders moved swiftly to reject suggestions that the process was dead because Mr Adams was unable to deliver an end to violence.

But Mr Adams repeated his call for clarification of the Downing Street declaration, arguing that Sinn Féin was not simply playing for time.

Two days after John Major turned down his request for more clarification, Mr Adams said that he was still seeking a proposition to put to the leadership of the IRA.

Meanwhile John Hume, leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, said he did not believe the IRA had decided to reject the declaration. He said: "My understanding is that the matter is still under consideration. Given the nature of that organisation I expect that to take time. The last thing they want is a split in their ranks."

According to Mr Hume, Mr Adams had said: "There is going to be no republican split. There is no potential for it, there is no reason for it and there is no truth whatsoever anywhere in the broad republican family of any indication that there is going to be any split."

Several civilians were feared hurt in an explosion near Ballygawley, Co Tyrone, last night. There were no security forces in the area.

Prince begins unofficial attempt to boost royal stock Down Under

From Alan Hamilton
in Sydney

THE Prince of Wales, heir to the throne of Australia, arrives in Sydney today to begin a testing 12-day tour that may help to determine the course of the country's flirtation with republicanism.

Officially, it is not the Prince's mission to sell the monarchy; he is the guest of Paul Keating, the Prime Minister who put its abolition on the political agenda. But the Prince's performance is bound to have an effect on the public's perception of whether it wants to retain a hereditary head of state who lives on the other side of the world.

Without the Prince of Wales, he has lost a potent crowd-puller whose presence guaranteed large and enthusiastic gatherings during his last visit, to Australia's Bicentennial celebrations in 1988. But in what looks curiously, if unwittingly, like an attempt to steal some of his thunder, the Princess has accepted an honorary fellowship of the Royal Australian College of Dental Surgeons and has hinted that she may at some unspecified future date arrive in Sydney to have it conferred in person.

On this occasion the Prince's programme will concentrate on wortier issues associated with his own particular interests: the young unemployed, inner cities, the environment and an expedition to the outback to see an Aboriginal heritage site.

One of his first engagements will be a reception for firefighters and victims of the recent bushfires which brought destruction to Sydney's prosperous outer suburbs.

The Prince arrives at a prodigious time. A healthy



The Queen, her arm in plaster after a riding fall, greets well-wishers outside church in Hillingdon

recovery in the Australian economy has reduced the need for political diversions, and the republican debate has temporarily subsided as a political issue. The most recent opinion poll, in December, showed that since April support for the monarchy has risen by 10 per cent, with 48 per cent of Australians now in favour of its retention.

The Queen has also reappeared on the £5 banknote, displacing the portrait of Caroline Chisholm, an Australian pioneer. The switch, however, has earned far from universal approval.

On a personal level, the Prince and Mr Keating have struck up a friendship since

they met at Balmoral last September and they now correspond regularly on matters of architecture, a subject of great interest to the Prime Minister of a country which has a greater interest in aesthetics than its tired beer-swilling image might suggest. Mr Keating appears to have been forgiven for his lese-majesté during the Queen's visit in 1992, when he put his arm around the monarch to guide her, and his wife refused to curtsy.

The Prince will make several major speeches during his tour. When he tackles the question of a possible Australian republic, he will do little more than reflect the view of

the Queen, that it is a matter for Australians to decide and that the Crown will accept the decision provided it is democratically arrived at.

It will not be arrived at yet. Mr Keating, who initially promised a referendum on the issue during the life of the present parliament, has now postponed it to beyond the next general election, and it is unlikely to take place before 1997 at the earliest.

Demographic changes in the population will eventually determine the outcome as much as any other factor. Already, 40 per cent of Australians come from a non-English speaking background, and any reference to the Queen is being dropped from the oath of citizenship sworn by new immigrants.

Unlike his recent visits to the Gulf, the Prince will not be promoting British exports. He will not meet Michael Heseltine, President of the Board of Trade, who is leading a British selling mission during the royal visit. By convention, members of the Royal Family do not act as export salesmen when guests in other Commonwealth countries. It would, they feel, be a rudeness towards the host country, which is paying for their visit.

Instead, the Prince will concentrate on wider issues. At a meeting tomorrow of Australia's leading businessmen, gathered under the umbrella of his International Business Leaders' Forum, he will remind them that they occupy a key position in the Asia-Pacific region, currently enjoying a growth rate far in excess of that seen even during the old industrial revolution in the West.

Diary, page 16

High Court facing a shortage of judges

Continued from page 1

where they seek to challenge decisions by government or other public bodies.

With 12 judges taken up on criminal appeals, four hearing full judicial review cases and another four hearing applications for leave in such cases, Mr Justice Otten said only six were left to do the normal disputes. Of those, one was involved in a long-running river pollution case, another in a big fraud trial at the Old Bailey, a third would have to be set aside for inter-locutory applications and orders. Of the remaining three, two would have to handle listing of cases (one the jury list, and the other non-jury).

"That leaves one High Court judge," he said. "The situation is dire, particularly at the beginning of next term." Normally judges from the Commercial Court could be brought in to help out but the Lloyd's litigation would prevent that. He predicted that he would have to use perhaps eight to ten deputy judges (QCs and circuit judges) a day just to keep on top of the throughput of work. There are 1,600 cases waiting to be heard, a reduction of nearly half the backlog of two years ago. However, the use of circuit judges and QCs has been criticised by the Bar which says that High Court litigants expect proper High Court judges to hear their complex disputes.

Among the emergency measures being considered is a cut on the requirement for High Court judges to go out on circuit. The crisis will ease slightly in mid-summer when seven High Court judges return from circuit duties.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Blizzards hamper search for climber

Hope was fading last night for the safety of Christopher Mitchell, 45, who has been trapped on a Scottish mountain since Saturday. A search in blizzard conditions was called off yesterday when darkness fell.

Mr Mitchell and his son, of Cuddington, Cheshire, were climbing Beinn a' Chaorainn, Highland, on Saturday when Mr Mitchell fell through a snow cornice. The son raised the alarm but the search was hindered by atrocious weather and there were warnings of avalanches. The search will resume today.

The weekend saw some of the worst gales experienced by the north of Scotland this winter. Worst affected was Shetland, where winds reached 140mph, causing widespread damage. Forecast, page 20

Lecturers delay strikes

Further education lecturers yesterday asked their union to delay possible one-day strikes and other industrial action. They want NATFHE to reopen negotiations over a plan to increase their working week from 30 hours to 37 and to cut 14-week holidays "substantially". Delegates meeting in London urged the union to plan escalating industrial action, but beginning February 28 instead of February 17. Last night Roger Ward of the Colleges Employers' Forum said: "No one wants to strike now that our policy is to stop about £100 a day from the pay of strikers."

Seabirds washed up

Oiled seabirds were still being washed up along the southwest coast of Scotland yesterday, adding to the total of 1,200 birds which have died during the past ten days. It is believed the slicks that have killed gulls and guillemots have come from tankers washing out their tanks and a specially equipped plane has been trying to pinpoint the sources of the pollution along the coastline of Wigtownshire, Ayrshire and Northern Ireland. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has called for government action to prevent a "disaster".

Hit-and-run victims

A 21-year-old man was being questioned by police in Edinburgh last night after five people were injured by a car which failed to stop on Saturday night. The victims, all from Edinburgh, had just left a social function in a church hall. The car was later found abandoned near by, Laura Ryan, 8, was in Edinburgh Royal Infirmary with her stepfather, David Rennie, 28. In the same hospital, and said to be in serious condition, were Stephen Doris, 32, and Alan Macdonald, 36. Mr Doris's wife Yvonne, 28, was detained in Western General Hospital, also seriously injured.

Suburban stabbings

Detectives were yesterday questioning a man after his neighbour was stabbed to death and three other people were wounded, Harry Stephenson, 51, a bricklayer, died after his attacker had burst into his house in a Cardiff suburb late on Saturday night. The man then forced his way into another house in the road, where two women and a man were stabbed in a violent confrontation. Damage was caused at both houses and a brick was thrown through the window of a third property. Police called to the scene arrested a 33-year-old man shortly afterwards.

Mob attack after funeral

Relatives of a youth charged with the murder of Kieran Hegarty, 11, who was battered to death in a wood near his home at Stranabeg, Co Tyrone, have been forced out of their homes by angry mobs. A crowd gathered hours after the funeral of Kieran, whose naked body was found in a drain, and set fire to the home of Sharon Ray, a sister of Brian Doherty, 19, who has been remanded in custody accused of the murder. The home of the youth's mother, Sheila Doherty, was also attacked and police were pelted with stones. Priests in the town yesterday appealed for calm.

'Halt foetus research'



The Archbishop of York, Dr John Hahgood, left, has called for scientists to halt research which could lead to infertility treatment using eggs from aborted foetuses. Dr Hahgood, in an interview recorded for tonight's Granada TV *World in Action* programme, said: "This is a further step which affects the most intimate relationships - with human beings, so don't let's go down this road any further."

Burglar attacks widow

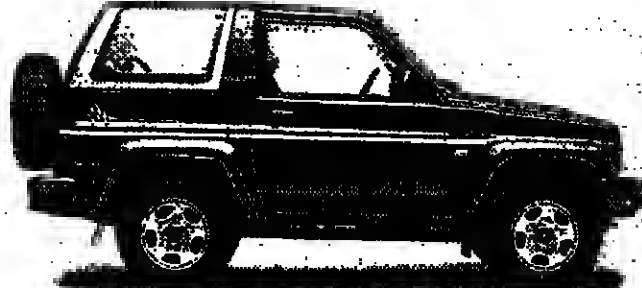
A widow aged 96 lay unconscious for up to ten hours yesterday after being attacked by a burglar. She is seriously ill after being found suffering from head injuries and hypothermia in her ground-floor flat at a sheltered housing complex at Addlestone, Surrey. The raid happened between 11pm Saturday and 9am yesterday, when the widow for the complex broke into the pensioner's flat after being unable to get a reply. Police do not know yet what was stolen but a curtain torn from its rail is believed to have been used to carry property away.

Charity begins with pets

More Britons give to charity than do citizens of many other Western nations, but their donations are among the smallest and the preferred beneficiaries are animals. According to a survey published today by the Charities Aid Foundation, 65 per cent of the British public give to charity, compared with 71 per cent of Spaniards and only 27 per cent of French. The average monthly donation by a Briton is £7. In Spain, the average is £7.50; in America, £19.50; and in Canada, £22. Countries that run national lotteries elicit the largest individual donations.

'Top Gear's' top value off roader.

It's easy to see why 'Top Gear' magazine gave the Daihatsu Sportrak top marks. With its 16 valve fuel-injected engine, power steering, removable hardtop, split-folding rear seats and electric windows, it's the 4x4 that can't be beaten on the road or off it.



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THE NEW SPORTRAK DAIHATSU

'He was not to be intimidated: not by authority, not by office, certainly not by Southern plausibility'

Brian Redhead, the distinctive voice of Today, falls silent

By LIBBY PURVES

WE HAVE lost a voice, a national voice. Despite his recent illness and his long, well-hidden fight against worsening arthritis and diabetes, it is still hard to believe that we shall not hear Brian Redhead's distinctive tone again at dawn, crackling with audible glee at being first up in the morning with a damn good story to tell.

Like any good teacher or good journalist, he had roused almost every emotion in his time from passionate appreciation to equally passionate irritation, and sat smilingly through a number of political

storms in the 1980s, when the rage of the Thatcher Government against unsympathetic broadcasters was focused, understandably, on him and his peculiar ability to needle the heart out of an issue. Nobody else on the radio, and certainly nobody on television, now displays quite the same barefaced, cheeky, fast-moving and free-ranging intelligence.

He was one of a kind, and knew it, not least because he always brought to the metropolitan world of public affairs a certain Northern chippiness. At Cambridge he had refused to answer a question in Finals

because he thought it shoddily framed; his early career was on the *Manchester Evening News* and *Manchester Guardian*, working with old-fashioned journalists who demanded straight answers to straight questions. He was, therefore, a great asset to a medium which, as late as the 1970s, was still perhaps a little too polite.

As he proved in confrontation with Denis Healey, Nigel Lawson and other accomplished bullies of all parties, Brian Redhead was not to be intimidated: not by authority, not by office, certainly not by smooth Southern plausibility. He was not an unkind interviewer, and had a genuine liking for politicians and their trade; but even at 2am on election mornings he rarely gave them an easy ride.

Technically, his most useful knack was for changes of pace. Brian could frame baroque, opinionated, anecdotal questions one moment — endless, some of them, during the News 24 experiment in the Gulf War — and at the next moment be jabbing at his opponent with short, bald enquiries and demands for plain speaking. It was effective: his 20 years on *Today* covered a period when politi-



Sue MacGregor shares the microphone with Brian Redhead on the *Today* programme during 1990. He always worked "with gusto"

cians and public figures have become perceptibly more difficult to interview, increasingly wily and over-trained in defensive manoeuvres. His talent was for making complex issues simple enough to argue in a three-minute slot, and then forcing his interviewees to address the central point before time ran out.

And underlying it all there was in Brian's manner, whether in the office or on the air, an almost unerring undercurrent of cheerfulness.

During the three-and-a-half years I sat next to him at the *Today* table as presenter, I never ceased to marvel at it. He came in at 4.30am, humming "Keep your feet still, Georgie Hiney", rubbing his hands and disconcerting the night staff with opinionated questions about the morning's lead stories, while journalists 20 years younger could still barely raise their noses from their coffee. And whatever story he was covering, his on-air manner seemed to imply

that whatever the answer, whatever the outcome, it will at the very least, be interesting. The security and support of his home life made him hard to know intimately as a colleague. He did not bring problems to work. But he believed in intellectual communication as one of the most important human connections, and on that level would engage in affable argument with anybody, of any age and rank, anytime. It was revealing, and to those who knew him touching, that after the death of his son and his own move towards a stronger religious faith, his immediate instinct was to communicate the things he had discovered through his own tragedy.

He made, in the years following, two vast radio series on the Bible and the history of Christianity: always with the same argumentative, interested, optimistic tone in his voice. It was impressive also to see how in his later years, despite his infirmities, he would forgo nothing that interested him as a journalist, whatever the effort: his presence at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 was a triumph of determination which — although no listener could have known it — cost him a good deal of effort. It is hard, almost impossible, to believe that all that glee and gusto is lost to us so early.

Leading article, page 17
Obituary, page 19

Vicar tells of weakness for sex tapes

By RUTH GLEDHILL
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

A VICAR who has confessed to visiting sex shops to buy pornographic films went into hiding yesterday, leaving his three Sunday services to be taken by a colleague.

The Rev Stuart Edwards, vicar of Holy Cross, a parish of 6,000 souls in Blackpool, asked for forgiveness. But he also complained about the quality of the tapes he had bought, one of which was blank.

Fr Edwards, who was recognised going into the sex shop on a number of occasions, confessed: "Different people have different releases. I have been foolish and gullible and I hope people will forgive me. But I have also been ripped off. I spent £70 on the tapes but one of them was blank all the way through. One can hardly take this matter to trading standards."

Fr Edwards, 47, an Anglo-Catholic who had doubled church attendance at Holy Cross and set up soup kitchens for the homeless since he arrived there 2½ years ago, is to attend a week-long conference from today.

In a statement, the Bishop of Blackburn, the Right Rev Alan Chesters, made it clear that he did not condone such behaviour "but understands that Fr Edwards acted under the pressure of the moment and that he now regrets what he did". One parishioner said: "Some of his congregation, especially perhaps the more elderly, will not be very forgiving. No one is perfect but are these the sort of standards to expect?"

Bedroom survey 'can't be trusted'

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S attitude to sex will come under scrutiny this week when the largest-ever survey of sexual behaviour is published, and MPs prepare to vote on reducing the age of consent for homosexual men.

A BBC poll of MPs found a majority in favour of lowering the age from 21 to 16, but the pollsters find yesterday they believed that 16 would emerge as the compromise choice.

The sex survey, carried out by the Wellcome Trust, was made famous by Baroness Thatcher's attempt to ban it when she was Prime Minister in 1988. It claims to show that serial monogamy is preferred to promiscuity, adultery is the exception rather than the rule and the gay community is smaller than had been thought. But critics have attacked the findings on the grounds that what people say about sex is inherently unreliable.

That view is supported by anecdotes from those who asked the questions in a pilot study for the Wellcome survey. A 30-year-old single man interviewed was asked what he understood by the word heterosexual. "Well, it's all the same to me. Heterosexual, bisexual — they're all bloody queers," he replied.

A happily married man in his 40s, with an active sex life, was asked during the pilot study what he understood by vaginal sex. "Yeah, there, again, it's something that doesn't appeal to me," he said. "I don't know why it revolts me."

Even questions about the number of sexual partners can

be understood in a variety of ways. One 19-year-old woman defined a sexual partner as "not just someone you sleep with, it's a friend". However, a married woman in her late 30s said: "I can't remember the last time we had what you'd call full sexual intercourse but you see that doesn't really matter to me. He's still my sexual partner."

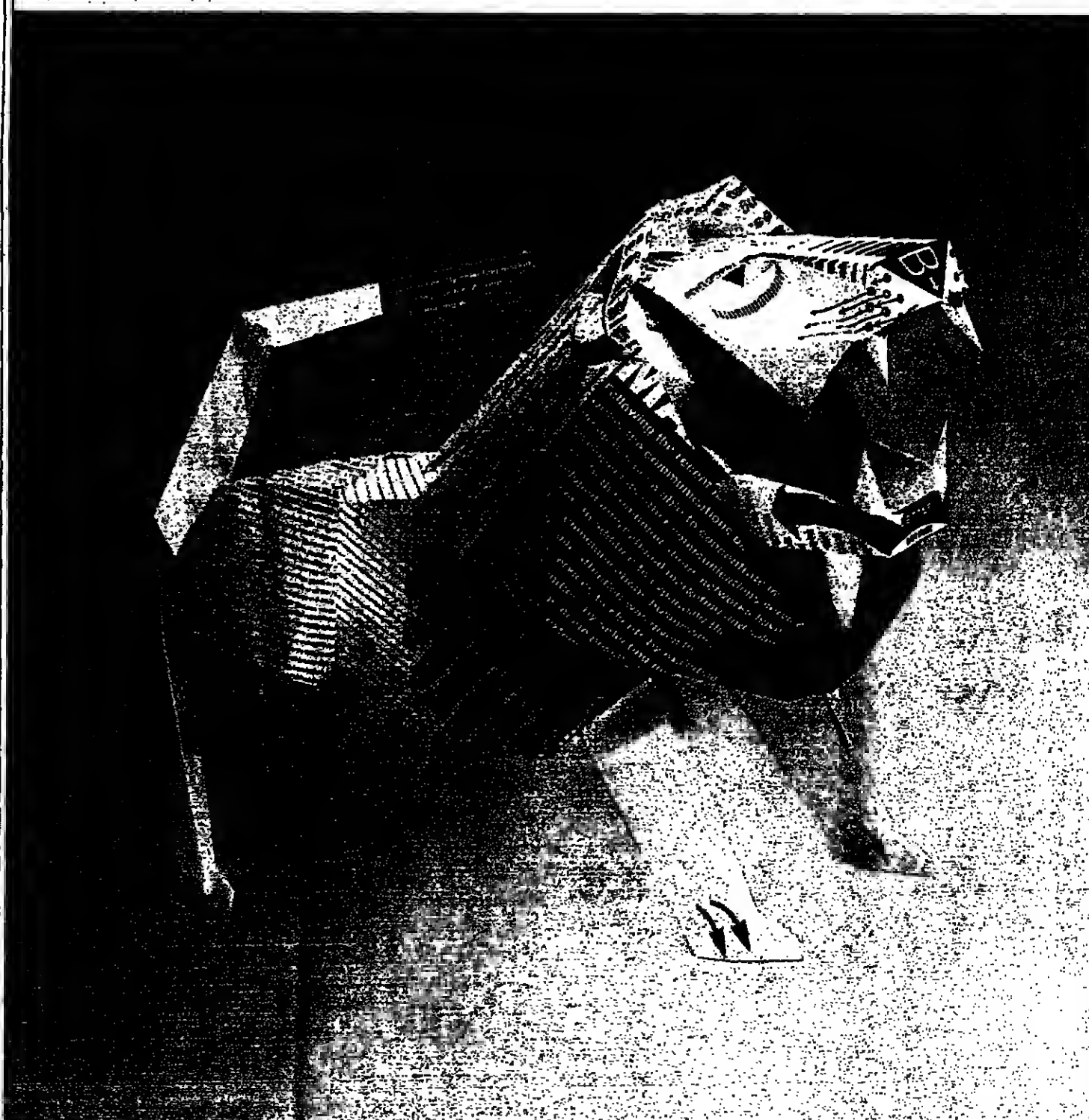
As well as misunderstanding, surveys of sexual behaviour are at risk from boasting, embarrassment and memory lapses. Kudos attaches to some answers, opprobrium to others.

The Wellcome researchers took more care than any of their forerunners to divest their questions of difficult, confusing or offensive terms. They eschewed the words heterosexual and homosexual in favour of "sex with a man/woman" and other terms, such as vaginal sex, were carefully defined.

However, gay activists insist that the survey's finding that only one man in 90 has had a homosexual experience in the past year is a gross underestimate. Peter Tanshell of the pressure group Out-Rage said: "Closet gays are very unlikely to admit their homosexuality to a total stranger who turns up on the doorstep."

The researchers said there was no reason for anyone to lie. Respondents were given questionnaires in private and asked to write down their answers anonymously. Kaye Wellings, the team's medical sociologist, said: "People are not intrinsically dishonest."

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Spielberg honoured for epic

FROM GILES WHITTILL
IN LOS ANGELES

THE film-maker Steven Spielberg stepped closer to the Oscar that has eluded him when he won two Golden Globe awards this week-end for *Schindler's List*.

His heart-rending 3½-hour epic about the Holocaust was named Best Motion Picture (Drama) at the awards ceremony on Saturday. Spielberg was named Best Director.

The Golden Globes, presented by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, are a sign of voters' preferences in the run-up to the Oscars, which will be presented in March. *Schindler's List*, which went on general release last month, has been acclaimed by most film critics in America.

Spielberg has had huge box-office hits with effects-laden blockbusters such as *ET*, *Jaws* and, last summer, the dinosaur adventure-film *Jurassic Park*. But after accepting the award and a standing ovation in the Beverly Hilton Hotel's ball-



Hunter: best actress



Spielberg: two awards

room, he said: "I would have traded that whole dinosaur thing for *Schindler's List* because this was much more important. I can always go out and make an adventure film."

Schindler's List is based on the true story, first told in Thomas Keneally's Booker Prize-winning *Schindler's Ark*, of a German industrialist who saved hundreds of Polish Jews from the sadism of the SS in a Krakow con-

centration camp, and later from the gas chambers of Auschwitz.

The film became a personal crusade for Spielberg, whose film-making had hitherto largely ignored his Jewish roots.

Other awards went to Holly Hunter, as Best Actress in *The Piano* and Robin Williams as Best Actor (Comedy) in *Mrs Doubtfire*.

Sayles dies, page 13

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Patients dying for want of dialysis as machines lie idle

By JEREMY LAURANCE
AND DAVID PEARLEY

NEY dialysis machines in London hospitals are still being allowed to stand idle while patients elsewhere are being left to die. The under-use of the machines was first highlighted in a survey six months ago.

All except one of the 15 hospitals that provide dialysis in the four Thames regions have spare places on their machines. A survey by The Times shows that almost 500 extra patients could be treated if the machines were run at full stretch for three shifts a day. At the moment 1,100 patients are treated.

After an independent survey last May showed a similar shortfall, Tom Sackville, the junior health minister, claimed that the use of the machines fluctuated and a different time would convey a different picture. However, the Times survey, conducted in mid-December, shows that the level of use is unchanged since last May.

Despite the spare capacity, patients with renal failure in some parts of the South East are dying because they cannot get access to a machine. In mid-Bassex, Maidstone, Kent, only 20 patients per million population are treated for kidney failure compared with the estimated 80 per million who need dialysis.

In a letter to David Heathcoat-Amory, Tory MP

Nothing has changed in the six months since it was disclosed that London hospitals were under-using their kidney machines

for Wells, who had complained to the Health Department on behalf of a constituent, Mr Sackville said that some spare capacity was necessary for emergencies and as back-up in case a machine failed. But the Times survey shows that ten of the 15 hospitals have large amounts of spare capacity with spaces for at least an extra 20 patients each.

The worst performers, Guy's and St Thomas' hospitals, in central London, treat 96 patients on 33 machines. The best performer, Charing Cross Hospital, also treats 96 patients but on only 15 machines.

Mr Sackville said the Health Department had received no reports of patients (diagnosed as needing dialysis) being denied it and therefore dying. "Such a state of affairs would be unacceptable," he said.

However, the independent review of renal services commissioned by the Government following the Tomlinson report, which conducted the first survey of kidney-machine use last May, said: "Acceptance rates (for dialysis) are significantly low in some of the shire district health authorities and well below 80 patients per million population, suggest-

ing that population need is not being met in these areas."

Professor Nisar Malik, chairman of the review, which is due later this year, said that the under-use of machines in London was almost unique in Britain. "The information we have is that there are patients with renal disease who are not receiving treatment. It may be that they are not being referred or not recognised as people who would benefit from treatment. I presume the minister is saying that he has received no reports of diagnosed patients dying because they have been denied treatment."

Professor Malik agreed that patients denied treatment would die. He said that whenever a specialist kidney clinic was set up in a new area "the number of patients expected in that community have been there". To meet the need, specialist clinics should be provided locally where pa-

tients can reach them easily, he said.

Each kidney machine can treat six patients if it is used six days a week on a standard three-shift system - morning, afternoon and evening. The patients attend three times a week for a dialysis session lasting between four and six hours. There is no waiting list because patients who do not get immediate treatment die.

In London most hospitals operate a two-shift system but some, such as the Charing Cross, run three shifts. Most say they do not have the staff or resources to run their machines more intensively, and they are not getting the referrals.

A Health Department spokesman said that the number of patients receiving kidney dialysis had increased from 7,000 to 22,000 since 1980, and that 12,000 patients had transplants, more than in any other country in Europe.

However, ministers have accepted evidence from the Renal Association that the incidence of end-stage renal failure "may be higher than current levels of take-up suggest", he said.



Raphael Bourgeois, a politics student, found police waiting for him at Boots

Boots staff smoke out pot shots

By A STAFF REPORTER

A STUDENT has been cautioned by police after staff at Boots the Chemist saw pictures of people smoking cannabis on a film he had put in to be developed.

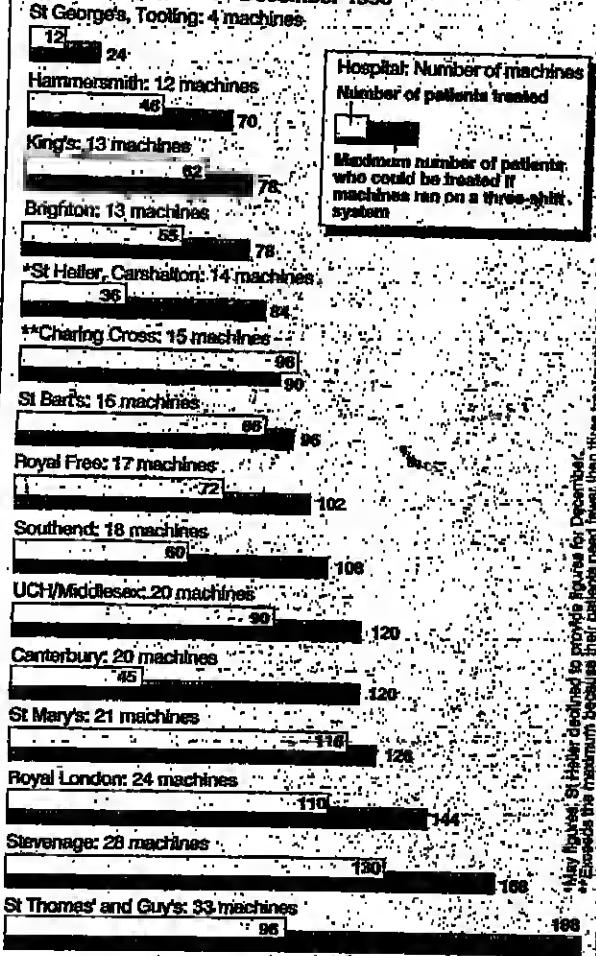
Officers were waiting for Raphael Bourgeois, 19, a politics student, when he went to collect his prints at a New-castle branch of the store. The film showed undergraduates smoking cannabis cigarettes and a pipe at a party. Dark-room technicians alerted detectives who waited for the student to collect the pictures. Mr Bourgeois spent three hours in custody before being released and cautioned. He was allowed to keep the film.

"What are these people doing looking at my private pictures?" he said yesterday. "I only took them in for a two-hour process and when I returned there was a detective waiting to take me off to the cells."

"It's an awful infringement of my personal liberty. Police have confiscated the pipe and my friends have stopped smoking because it's a real drag and too much trouble."

UNDERUSE OF DIALYSIS MACHINES

December 1993



For sale: Cold War hot seats with view

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE Home Office is to put up for sale the ultimate in country retreats: 21 bomb-proof Cold War bunkers.

Stretching estate agent's jargon to the extreme, the bunkers used by the now disbanded Royal Observer Corps are being described as "small country estates with a view".

The bunkers were designed as observation posts to be manned in the event of a nuclear war. Many were built at high points and have clear views across southern England.

The demise of the corps was announced in 1991. The Home Office said the likelihood of a nuclear strike on Britain was so low that it was no longer needed.

Encouraged by the sale of a number of the unwanted bunkers, the Home Office has decided to hand over 21 more of the underground shelters to a property management firm, Unicorn Consultancy Services, which is to invite tenders from the public.

Included in the new batch for sale are bunkers at Portland Bill in Dorset, Stockbridge in Hampshire, Kemble in Gloucestershire, Crewkerne in Somerset, Bampton in Devon and Penryn in Cornwall.

Coroner to see report on boy shot by father

POLICE are preparing a report for the coroner into the death of a 12-year-old boy, killed by a blast from his father's shotgun during a pheasant shoot on Saturday.

Oliver Drabble died during the last organised shoot of the season on his family's land at Five Oakes, near Horsham, West Sussex.

His father, Timothy Drabble, a partner with London solicitors Gregory Rowcliffe and Milners, ran a regular syndicate and often took Oliver, his only son, with him to watch although he was too young to handle a gun.

A police spokesman said yesterday there were no suspicious circumstances surrounding the shooting.

Others at the shoot were lawyers and judges, including retired Court of Appeal judge Sir Francis Purchas, whose son was managing the event.

Sir Francis, who did not witness the shooting, said: "We all know what happened. It was an extremely unfortunate accident and could have happened to anyone."

At the family home, Terry O'Flynn, Oliver's uncle, said: "The family is in shock and we are struggling to come to terms with what has happened."

"We are grieving privately and we are all too upset to talk about Oliver when it is still fresh in our minds."

Neighbours in the village described Oliver, who was due to take up a place at Winchester School this year, as a delightful child.



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Mother fights to sue doctor who wrongly diagnosed sex abuse

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A WOMAN whose four-year-old daughter was taken away from her for a year is to challenge a judge's decision that she cannot sue the psychiatrist involved. He wrongly diagnosed sexual abuse by the mother's boy friend.

The test case seeks to establish the right of parents to sue professionals who make such mistakes. Other similar cases are awaiting the outcome.

The mother will seek in the Court of Appeal tomorrow to overturn a High Court ruling by Judge Phelan that she and her daughter, who is now ten, cannot claim compensation against doctors and social workers for psychological damage caused by the separation.

They are seeking to sue the London borough of Newham, Newham district health authority and the unnamed consultant child psychiatrist. The case will be heard by the Master of the Rolls, Sir Thomas Bingham.

After the wrong finding of sex abuse, the girl was placed with foster parents. She was returned home a year later when a transcript of an interview with her was re-read and found to show that her mother's boy friend was innocent.

Judge Phelan accepted in March that the girl and her mother, who cannot be identified, had suffered "much distress" during their year apart.

Medical evidence was that they were suffering from a psychiatric disorder of a degree and type recognised as giving rise to a claim in damages.

But he accepted the argument of the defendants that the rule giving court witnesses immunity from negligence claims covered professionals diagnosing sex abuse.

Even if court proceedings had not been started, the professionals had made their reports in the knowledge that they might be used in court, the judge said.

In the Cleveland child sex abuse scandal, nearly £1 million compensation was paid in an out-of-court settlement to 27 families whose children were taken into care.

Joe Davies, the solicitor for the mother and child, said: "This case is vital because it seeks to establish the principle that parents and children who may have been victims of carelessly made allegations of abuse can seek redress in the courts if such allegations turn out to be unfounded."

Although the courts had so far said professionals in such cases were covered by the witness immunity, in the Cleveland case the compensation was paid out on the basis that the professionals were liable.

Thousands of victims of medical or other accidents will

have their claims for damages jeopardised under government plans to make them use the small claims arbitration procedure instead of the courts, lawyers say.

Lawyers from four leading personal-injuries firms have told the Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, that personal injury cases are unsuitable for the small claims procedure.

Edward Solomonis, of Brian Thompson & Partners, one of the firms, said that as legal aid was not available for people in the small claims court, they would be fighting unaided complex and difficult cases against large insurance companies who could afford lawyers.

The Lord Chancellor intends that personal-injury claims — possibly up to a level of £2,500 — be handled through small claims arbitration rather than the formal court system.

Lord Mackay faces renewed pressure this week to restore some of the cuts he made to the legal aid scheme after new figures have disclosed the legal aid budget will be underspent by nearly £60 million this year.

The figures, released to the Law Society by his department, show that by April spending on legal aid will be £1,225 million against planned provision of £1,283 million.



Dr Geza von Hapsburg, art historian and organiser of the world's largest Fabergé exhibition, holds the first egg made by Carl Fabergé and given by Tsar Alexander III to his wife for Easter in 1885. The touring exhibition opens at the Victoria & Albert Museum on Wednesday

Black crusader returns to snub 'Klannish' judiciary

BY ANDREW PIERCE

ONE of the Bar's most flamboyant characters, Rudy Narayan, who retired to Guyana in 1991, is launching a comeback by staging Britain's first international conference for black lawyers and judges.

Mr Narayan, a champion of black rights, once tried to sue the Lord Chancellor and three judges for racial prejudice. And he told a Bar Council disciplinary tribunal in 1983 that its all-white membership would "do credit to

the Ku Klux Klan". Mr Narayan has not mellowed with age. "Not one invitation for the conference" will be issued to members of the British judiciary, said Mr Narayan who practised at the bar for 22 years. "I want the conference to inject some dynamism, backbone and fearlessness into our black members. I want to light some fires. I want to create a revolutionary spirit in the British judiciary."

Invitations for the conference, at the end of July, have been sent to Robert Mugabe, president of Zimbabwe. An-

gela Davis, the black rights campaigner in the United States, members of the judiciary in the US and the Caribbean and to Keith Vaz, the Labour MP and solicitor.

Mr Narayan, who last week set up Civil Rights UK, which operates a free 24-hour legal service in the east end of London, will address the two-day conference in London, which will end with a dinner in the House of Commons. There are 343 black barristers out of 8,000 and only four black judges, one of whom was appointed

last week, according to figures supplied by the Lord Chancellor's department. The Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, is proposing racial awareness training for members of the judiciary.

Mr Narayan said: "When I proposed identical training 20 years ago I was suspended from the bar. That is why this conference is so important. When a black is appointed to a senior legal position here it is front page news. I want the conference to learn from the United States."

'Oppressive' CSA referred to Europe

BY EDWARD GORMAN

A TORY MEP has asked the European Commission to investigate what he says is the extremely oppressive economic regime imposed on divorced fathers by the Child Support Agency.

The request comes as Parliament prepares to debate changes to the Child Support Act under which the CSA operates, which have been tabled by the Government after a wave of opposition to the new legislation.

Bill Newton Dunn, who represents Lincolnshire in the European Parliament, has told the commission that the Act and the CSA discriminate against men, because men form 95 per cent of what he called the agency's victims.

Mr Newton Dunn also says the Act discriminates against second wives, many of whom are being forced to make what they believe are unfair sacrifices to help to support first wives, and is forcing some

second families to leave the country to seek a livelihood elsewhere in the EC.

Mr Newton Dunn said yesterday that he wanted the commission to investigate whether the Act contravened the principles of equality as laid down in the Treaty of Rome.

The changes to the legislation announced just before Christmas by Alistair Burt, the social services minister, include the introduction of a phasing system over 18 months for new maintenance bills, and three alterations to the formula by which bills are calculated.

The CSA faced fresh criticism yesterday after it cut an absent father's maintenance payments to £2.20p a week. The agency has told Scott Lyons, 18, of Walsall, West Midlands, that he was paying too much after a court ordered him to pay £4 a week to bring up his son Robert.

KEENE
ON
CHESS

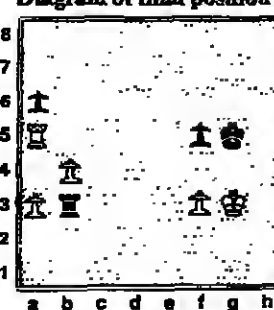
BY RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Adams fights back. Michael Adams fought back against Boris Gelfand of Belarus in the final championship in Wijk aan Zee, Holland. Adams had been trailing 2.5-1.5 but has now adjourned with an advantage that guarantees him a win.

White: Michael Adams
Black: Boris Gelfand
Sicilian Defence

1. e4 c5
2. d4 d6
3. d5 d5
4. Bc4 g6
5. cxd4 g6
6. Nc3 Bg7
7. Ng5 O-O
8. Nf3 e5
9. dxe5 dxe5
10. Qd2 Ne6
11. Bc3 Bc6
12. Bb5 Na5
13. Qe2 a6
14. Bc3 Nc6
15. Rd1 Qc8
16. Rac1 Rd8
17. Na4 Bc7
18. Bc4 Bc4
19. Qxc4 Rxc4
20. Qxc4 Rxc4
21. Rxc4 Rxc4
22. Nc4 eod4
23. Bc4 Bc4
24. Rd4 Rd4
25. Qd2 Na5
26. Rd5 Nc6
27. Rd2 g5
28. Kg9 Kg7
29. h4 g6h4+
30. Kc4 Ng5
31. b3 Rh1+
32. Kg3 h5
33. Nc5 h4+
34. Kd4 Ng6+
35. Ke3 Rh1+
36. Re2 Rh2
37. Nxb7 Rh3+
38. Kd4 Rh3+
39. Ke3 Rh3+
40. Kd2 Rh7
41. Kd6 Rh7
42. e5 Rh6
43. Rxe5 Rh6+
44. Ke3 Kg6
45. Re4 Kg5
46. Ke2 f5
47. Rd4 Re5+
48. Kf1 Rd6
49. Kg1 Rd1+
50. Kf2 Rd6
51. Rd5 Kg4
52. Rd4+ Kg5
53. g3 Nc3+
54. Kg3 Rd3+
55. f3 Rd6
56. Rd5 Rd6
57. b4 Rd6
58. a3 Rd6
59. Rd5 Rd6
60. Rd5 Rd6

Game adjourned
Diagram of final position



Kamsky appears certain to qualify against Van der Sterren, as do Salov against Khalilman, Anand against Yusupov and Kramnik against Yudasin. Timman leads Lautier 3-2.

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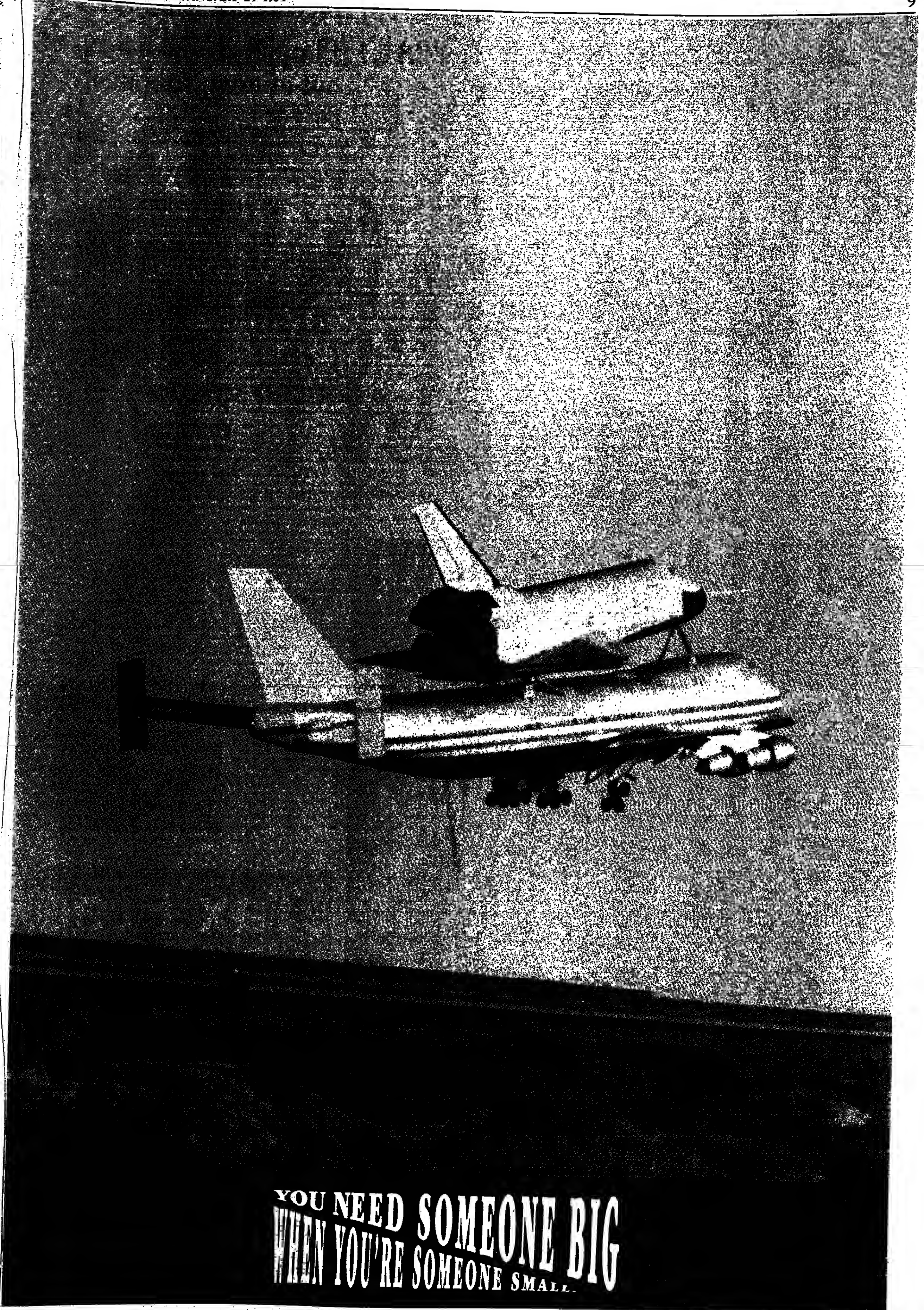
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Road tax 'should be £630 a year'

By Nick Nuttall
Environment
Correspondent

MOTORISTS would pay at least £630 a year if the road tax were made to cover the full social cost of the roads they use and the pollution they cause.

That assessment comes from a professor of environmental economics, who this week will publish research into the true costs of air and noise pollution, traffic accidents and the economic impact of increasingly congested roads.

While the Government raises £14.7 billion from road and fuel taxes, the actual costs of Britain's growing number of private vehicles is running at about £25.7 billion annually, David Pearce, of University College London, says.

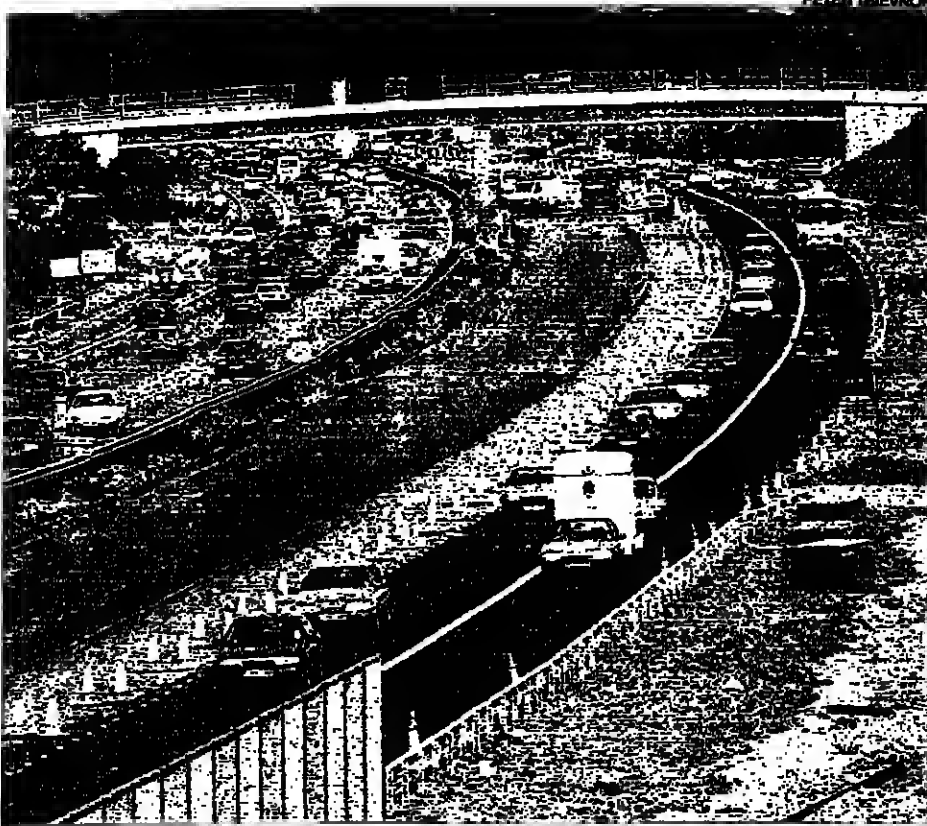
If the 22 million private vehicles were charged the true costs to society, then an extra £11 billion—or £500 a car—would be needed on top of the current road tax of £130.

His research document, *Measuring Sustainable Development*, coincides with the publication tomorrow of the Government's *Sustainable Development Strategy*.

Sustainability is fast becoming the environment buzzword of the 1990s and John Gummer, the Environment Secretary, claims the Government is wedded to the principles of sustainable development, which he has defined as development that does not cheat on your children.

Professor Pearce says, however, that the government document will disclose how "UK plc is at best a marginally sustainable venture with too little saved to cover the depreciation of its assets".

The real health, environmental and social costs of the growing numbers of private motor cars and trucks are being ignored, he says, and undercharging drivers undermines the viability of more environmentally friendly forms of travel: buses, trains, bicycles and walking.



The Government is facing a revolt over plans to turn parts of the M25, seen above, into a 14-lane super-highway. Faced with a backlash from their constituents, Tory backbenchers and councils in the Home Counties are urging John MacGregor, the Transport Secretary, to re-examine the

entire £23 billion road-building programme and his approach to how Britain will cope with an increasing number of cars. Their fears are aired tonight in a BBC1 *Panorama* programme in which government supporters question the Transport Department's underlying philosophy.

"Transport is one sector of the economy in which almost everything has gone wrong... too much pollution, too much congestion, too much investment in roads, too little investment in public transport," Professor Pearce said yesterday. "Without a fundamental

change in policy it is inevitable that the transport sector will continue to impose large and growing costs on the natural environment, human health and the competitiveness of the British economy."

"The road network and motor vehicles are much more expensive than the Govern-

ment will acknowledge, with road and vehicle taxes covering only half of the true social and environmental costs," he said. Air pollution from traffic, including dirt, oxides of nitrogen and unburnt hydrocarbons, could be costing £2.8 billion a year, mainly through ill health.

Noise from cars and heavy goods vehicles could be costing £600,000 a year, mainly in productivity losses at work from tiredness and stress.

Road accidents could be costing over £4.7 billion annually, congestion could be costing industry £13.5 billion a year and direct damage to the road network from traffic at least £1.3 billion annually.

While welcoming moves to increase charges for road users through congestion charging and other measures, Professor Pearce fears these will not be draconian enough to reflect the true costs of allowing more private vehicles onto the highways.

Measuring Sustainable Development claims that damage from acid rain is costing farmers, timber companies, the health service and organisations responsible for public buildings, at least £1.3 billion a year.

"There is no credible policy on conserving biological diversity, with ever more 'protected areas' being damaged. Agriculture is markedly unsustainable with still-rising levels of

subsidy for intensive agriculture and no effective policy action," Professor Pearce said. □ *Blueprint 3: Measuring Sustainable Development*. David Pearce (Earthscan, 120 Pentonville Rd, London N1, £10.95)

Letters, page 17

Planners resist nation of out-of-town shopkeepers

The rise of out-of-town shopping has created a moral panic. But cities must adapt or die, Paul Barker writes

It is an urban conjuring trick. Our towns and cities are being turned inside out. The vigour that used to be the hallmark of a city centre is moving steadily outwards. It is a process many commentators, planners and politicians find unacceptable. All the more so, for having crept up on us, no one ever sat down and decided that things would be like this.

The bright new end-products—the fluffy, nylon-fur rabbits produced out of the market-place hat—are such phenomena as the Lakeside shopping centre, at Thurrock, Essex, or the Meadowhall centre in Sheffield. They are grandiose temples to late-20th century retailers and developers' black arts.

Something like panic is setting in. Hence last week's speech by John Gummer, the Environment Secretary, to the Town and Country Planning Association. "I want to tell you," he said, "that I have decided to take a rather closer interest in retail proposals outside the main shopping areas of our main towns and cities."

He expressed fears about the spread of "the drive-in philosophy we see across the Atlantic, where people mourn the loss of Main Street (now to be seen mainly at Walt Disney World)."

Seen historically, this reminds me of the planning panic in the 1920s and 1930s, as spec-built estates of semi-detached houses swelled out the birth of every British city. Eventually, of course, architects and planners began to see merit in what had been so mocked. In 50 years' time, I see the committee members agonising at English Heritage about whether Lakeside or Meadowhall best deserves listing.

Meanwhile, the panic. Nor is it confined to Britain. Outside even the oldest French town, you pass through a classic American "strip", petrol stations, supermarkets, furniture warehouses. Yet one of the election promises by the conservative prime minister, Edouard Balladur, last year was that he would draw a line and stop any more being built. It seems inexplicable, until you recall that one element in the French right-wing electoral coalition is the shopkeeper vote. M Balladur wants to keep it in his pocket.

Is the panic justified? Are city centres going to die out as shoppers, of their own volition, go out of town? The analogy is always with America, where the air-conditioned shopping mall was invented (in 1956, in Minneapolis). It is true the

American downtown has become a fairly strange place. In Washington last November, I needed a small battery. Nowhere could I find a shop that sold this kind of miscellaneous necessity. I had no time to drive out to the malls. I did without.

If I had been a resident white Washingtonian, I could have made that drive. But two thirds of the American capital is a grim black ghetto. These streets are as short of everyday shops as white Washington. But the ghetto dwellers often lack cars. They are trapped. The fear is that this might cross the Atlantic, derailing urban tracts, abandoned by business, and by any sign of hope. Out-of-town shops are undoubtedly part of a major shift in the pattern of our

The Times Essay

cities. But whether you can change the pattern by refusing to fit one piece of the jigsaw into place is a different matter.

I was walking around one of the poorest districts of east London one recent Monday. At the single, small sub-post office, a line of 50 people waited to be served. The number—and variety of shops on the street had been dwindling. I was told, for years. The final blow was the opening of a retail park, about a mile and a half away. There was nothing out-of-town about it. It was still in the heart of London. But customers could park. Retailers had elbow-room to set out their goods. The men and women in the post office queue, like

60 per cent of the local population, had no family car. They were stranded. What they were stranded by, however, was poverty. Cities have always been shaped by transport more than by anything else (as witness the inter-war suburbs). Cars on the roads have risen by 40 per cent in a decade, through boom and bust alike. (In a recession, fewer of the cars are new.) This is a tide you cannot turn. The best lifeboats for people trapped by it are these jobs and money. But that raises some tough questions much easier to point the finger at shopping malls.

We have always been a country where the commercial spirit was strong; stronger, arguably, than the industrial spirit. And this means constant innovation. When Napoleon mocked us as a nation of shopkeepers, he was making a very specific point. In England the age-old tradition of the street market, where you haggled for the best price, often with the farmer or clothier who had produced what you wanted, was being abandoned.

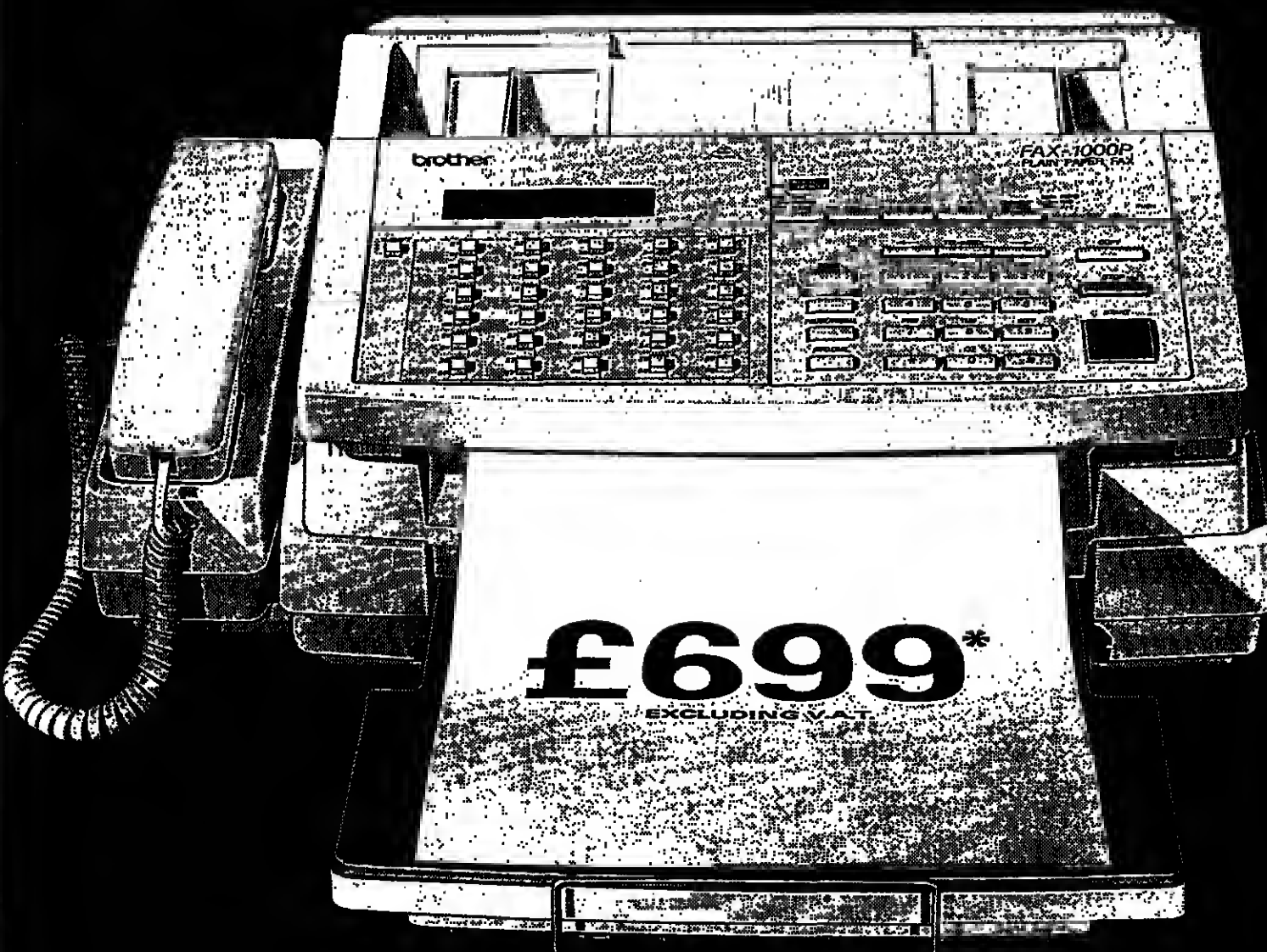
Paradoxically, if you are seeking a way forward for sickening dry city centres, it is markets that once again supply it. Markets flourish when property values drop. The classic example in London was Camden Lock, where an entire neighbourhood was reinvigorated by stalls set up in the shadow of planning blight. Hope may even lie in the much-depised car boot sales.

One thing is certain about cities. You can shape them only by going with the grain of change, not by cutting across it. Cities live by change. That is why moralists, down the ages have feared them. Often, I'm afraid, planners are just a latter-day variety of moralist.



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Doubts buried as £234m dream takes shape in jungle



Pergau dam site amid the jungle, project for power

FROM JAMES PRINGLE AT THE PERGAU DAM

THE 2,600 engineers and labourers working on the £234 million British-financed Pergau dam project, amid mist-wreathed mountains in remote northeast peninsular Malaysia, feel they are in the calm eye of the storm as controversy swirls round the project in the British Parliament.

"We have done nothing wrong and have nothing to hide," a Scottish civil engineer said as he strode along a downward sloping tunnel, seemingly big enough for a cross-Channel train, 1,000 ft beneath lush tropical vegetation.

Entering a vast underground granite cavern, which might have been a setting for *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and where a three-ton TNT charge was primed for blasting so that a turbine can be housed, he added: "In fact, we are rather proud of this achievement,

building a hydro-electric plant in the middle of thick jungle."

Pergau was lifted from the obscurity of remote Kelantan, the only state ruled by Malaysia's opposition Islamic PAS party, when a leading British civil servant branded the dam scheme, backed by John Major, as "unequivocally unsound". In addition, British environmental groups have claimed that the project is environmentally unsound.

"The situation on the ground, far removed from the fevered atmosphere of Westminster, looks somewhat different however. Predictably, local businessmen are enthusiastic and young men in Kota Bharu, the austere state capital, say that they are eager to work here, despite the required six 12-hour shifts a week. Kelantan,

British engineers are taming Malaysia's tropical forest to provide power in the wilderness. Yet despite pledges to protect wildlife and rebuild the environment, a tide of criticism is rising

after all, is not a booming state such as those around Kuala Lumpur, the Malaysian capital. This is the old Anthony Burgess Malaya of poor kampongs, chador-wearing girls, and the Muslim priests calling the faithful to pray five times a day.

There is concern about environment. Heavy floods and landslides along Malaysia's east-west highway — linking Kota Bharu with Penang, on the west coast — in late December, in which three Malaysian dam workers drowned, were blamed by locals on the dam work. "We need the

work, but also care about environmental issues," a student said.

Yet driving to the fenced-off village of red corrugated-iron-roofed houses, where the expatriate workers of the two British contractors, Balfour Beatty and Cementation, are housed, one passes lorry after heavy lorry loaded with red meranti, a local hardwood. The tops of mountains here are denuded of trees, and most local people and, predictably, the dam site engineers, blame the floods on "out of control" logging. A small herd of elephants is moving deeper into

the forest, engineers say, because of logging, not blasting. Government officials claim logging, some of which is being done along roads built to service the dam, is being brought under tighter control.

Touring the above-ground dam area with Eddie McEwan, the project director, it seemed the project, although inevitably the cause of minor environmental damage, was in no sense catastrophic. "Our impact on the long term is restricted to an area roughly equivalent to the size of St James's Park in London," a British engineer said. "We will restate everything. It will look quite nice when we have replanted bare patches with grass."

Some local subsistence farmers, who were working allegedly illegally on state land, were moved when work started in 1991 but were compensated. Zulkifli Os-

man, of the state electricity board, said. Some Orang Asli, or aboriginals, will continue to hunt on the periphery from a traditional jungle village near here. Until the collapse of communism, this area was sealed off because of its proximity to bases of the now defunct Communist Party of Malaysia in nearby Thailand, so settlers were few.

"After all, we still have tons of forest in Malaysia — it covers three-quarters of the country," said Zakaria Mohammed Yusof, a lecturer taking his class of student quantity surveyors around the site, as he surveyed the future reservoir and pondered environmental issues. Rustam Nasir, 22, a quantity surveyor student with a hard hat, said: "Environmental matters should always be considered, but I think in this case there is only a minor effect, outweighed by the usefulness of the project."

JONATHAN KAPLAN

Hurd faces grilling on claims of arms link to Pergau dam

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

THE British Government was yesterday facing growing embarrassment over persistent suggestions that companies involved in a controversial aid project in Malaysia benefited from a £1 billion arms agreement with the Malaysian government.

In the face of claims from Labour that the integrity of the Government is under scrutiny, Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, is due tomorrow to answer a Commons question from John Cunningham, his opposite number, asking whether there was any link between arms sales and the £234 million aid given to the Pergau dam project.

At the same time, the all-party Commons foreign affairs committee is expected to decide what action to take on the allegations. Any such link would be illegal under the Government's own rules.

Labour MPs on the committee are expected to press for a full-scale investigation. Dr Cunningham said yesterday this would be highly appropriate. It would enable

the committee to demand documents detailing opposition within Whitehall to the project, he said.

Senior Labour figures said yesterday that they had evidence from authoritative sources that the Government had reached a deal with the Malaysian government on the basis of aid and arms.

Sir Tim Lankster, permanent secretary at the Overseas Development Administration, divulged to the Commons public accounts committee last week that he had written to Mr Hurd and to Baroness Chalker, the Overseas Development Minister, saying that they had evidence from authoritative sources that the Government had reached a deal with the Malaysian government on the basis of aid and arms.

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The controversial £234 million Pergau hydro-electric dam is being built on this tranquil stretch of the Kelantan river in northeast Malaysia

Thatcher, then Prime Minister, and Lord Younger, then Defence Secretary.

The aid deal was finally approved by Mr Major and Mr Hurd in July 1991, despite the advice from officials that it was not sound. According to Labour sources, it was the first time that Mr Hurd had rejected the advice of his official "accounting officer."

Dr Cunningham said last night: "We have believed for some weeks now that the Pergau dam project payments raise very serious questions about the use of aid and the integrity of the Government."

"We will press the matter continuously. It is already clear that if this kind of event had occurred in local government — with the advice of the

accounting officer being ignored — the councillors involved would be liable to personal surcharge and disqualification from office."

If the select committee decides on an investigation, it could mean further trouble for the Government. Mr Major and Mr Hurd could be invited to give evidence.

The decision to give the go-

ahead for the project was made in February 1991 to honour promises made in 1989 by Lady Thatcher to Dr Mahathir Mohamed, the Malaysian Prime Minister, "and in the context of maintaining billions of pounds of British exports to Malaysia". These have totalled £5 billion since 1982 and doubled between 1988 and 1992.

Last week Sir Tim told the public accounts committee that Mr Major had overruled a memorandum from him warning that the aid package was "unequivocally a bad one in economic terms" and "an abuse of the programme". But Mr Major told the Commons: "It is about time the Opposition took a consistent position on these things."

Former ANC guerrilla campaigns in Soweto for de Klerk's party

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN SOWETO

AS THE South African election campaign moves into high gear, the National Party of President de Klerk has opened an office in the heart of Soweto to help it win support among township blacks. Even more remarkably, it has chosen as its Soweto representative an East German-trained former ANC guerrilla fighter, Veronda Banda, who was once arrested, tortured and imprisoned for trying to overthrow apartheid.

After much soul-searching, and to the dismay of some former "comrades", Mr Banda, 34, has now joined the white "enemy" and promotes the virtues of capitalism. In his sparsely furnished office near Soweto's Orlando railway station, Mr Banda attempts to explain his leap over the political fence. To understand, he says, you have to look back to the "sacrifices" he made during the armed struggle and his days as an angry young man.

After leaving school, Mr Banda says, he worked as a clerk in the law courts. He joined the ANC at the age of 17 and was involved in the 1976 Soweto uprising.

After a brief period in prison, he joined Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) the military wing of the ANC. He underwent training

in Angola, East Germany and Zimbabwe before returning to South Africa on a mission in 1982. But following a tip-off from informers he was arrested, tortured and sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment. He spent the next seven years on Robben Island with many of today's ANC leadership.

His release in 1990, soon after that of Nelson Mandela, marked the turning point in his political outlook. Although he remained a member of the ANC for the next two years, he grew increasingly disillusioned. There was

widespread bitterness among the "comrades", he says, because the organisation provided little support. There were no benefits and no jobs.

Politically the ANC proved incompatible with his vision of the "new South Africa." "Communism has not worked in other African countries and it is not going to work here," he argues. "This is a capitalist country. People will have more freedom if they remain under capitalism and they will be happier."

The National Party, he says, is the only party with the necessary economic and political "expertise". The leadership is strong and will manage the economy far better than the ANC. Unlike the ANC, they "know how to govern".

In the run-up to the April election it will be Mr Banda's task to convince fellow blacks of the "transparent assets" of the party he once tried to overthrow. He is planning an advertising campaign with posters and leaflets. There will be National Party "events" in the township.

Mr Banda claims many blacks, as well as whites, Indians and Coloureds, are saying they will vote ANC only because they feel intimidated. In the privacy of the voting booth, he suggests, it will be a different story: with a little persuasion, up to 20 per cent of blacks will vote for the National Party.

His views have not passed unnoticed by his former ANC comrades. Many have been critical, and some even say he is mad. Last weekend he appeared on a television discussion programme to defend himself against another former Umkhonto guerrilla.

However, he still has friends within the ANC and insists that others will come round to his way of thinking. "It is better to sleep with the devil you know than the devil you don't," he says.



Veronda Banda, a former guerrilla, campaigning for the National Party, which he once fought to overthrow

Army factions battle in Lesotho

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

HEAVY fighting erupted yesterday between rival military factions in Maseru, capital of Lesotho, and diplomats there said it appeared that a big offensive was under way.

A spokesman at the British High Commission said a considerable number of civilian wounded were being treated in hospital, but the number of military casualties was unknown. Bullets hit the home of Kevin Broadfoot, assistant director of the British Council in Lesotho, but neither he nor any member of his family was hurt.

The High Commission spokesman said: "There are about 600 British expatriates living and working in Lesotho and we have contacted them and urged them to stay indoors. There have been no reports of any of them being injured and

there is no question at the moment of evacuation." A British Army training team, based in Lesotho as instructors to the Royal Lesotho Defence Force (RLDF), was keeping the High Commissioner informed about the situation.

As dusk fell last night, heavy fighting flared up again after a short lull. Troops loyal to the government were believed to be battling against anti-government factions for control of a strategic ridge overlooking Maseru.

Soon after the outbreak of fighting South Africa closed its main border crossing-point into Lesotho. Civilian rule was restored in Lesotho last March after seven years of military dictatorship and there are growing fears that the deteriorating situation could threaten its return to democratic order. Clashes, which until

yesterday had claimed the lives of four soldiers, broke out ten days ago between rival military groups, ostensibly over a demand by some troops for a 100 per cent pay rise. But this is being seen as a smokescreen for broader political goals, including the overthrow of the government of Ntsu Mokhehle, leader of the Basotho Congress Party, which won an overwhelming victory in the election last March.

Troops from the Makoanyane barracks outside Maseru launched an attack at dawn yesterday on the RLDF headquarters. Automatic rifle and mortar fire continued almost non-stop for eight hours as the state radio broadcast appeals for people to stay off the streets. There were also reports of sustained fighting outside the town.

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Clinton talks of successes amid fresh sex tales

The President is asking that Congress judge him by his record in office as tales about his private life resurface to haunt him. Poll ratings offer him some cheer

FROM WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Clinton, in his State of the Union address tomorrow, will try to recapture the political high ground, which he has lost after a series of mishaps including the withdrawal of his nominee for Defence Secretary. There is also a daily drip of new allegations concerning marital infidelity and his links to an Arkansas financial scandal, which is being investigated by a special prosecutor.

None of these matters has yet damaged him in the poll ratings, which — with an approval level of more than 50 per cent — compare well with those of other former Presidents at the end of their first year in office. Tomorrow Mr Clinton will try to focus attention back on the political issues, which Americans feel most concerned about and which the White House considers have the greatest political mileage — the economic recovery and jobs, reform of the health sector, welfare reform and crime.

The applause Mr Clinton has received for his leadership in economic and social policy is marred by a continued barrage of new allegations about his private life and his conduct while Governor of Arkansas during the 1990s. The latest allegations were contained in a British newspaper yesterday, according to which he had an affair with a former Arkansas beauty queen in 1983. Most damaging of all were allegations that Mr Clinton, or someone claiming to represent him, had promised the woman a federal job in return for her silence during the 1992 presidential campaign. Asked to comment, a White House spokeswoman said yesterday that "the White House is not dignifying it with a response".

According to *The Sunday Telegraph*, Sally Perdue, who works as a supervisor in a home for the mentally retarded, said that when Mr Clinton approached her house during their brief affair ten years ago, his state troopers would "pull

up in a wooded area about 30 feet from the house and wait there. When Bill was ready to come out, he would signal using my patio light, flicking it on and off."

In one of the most revealing recent opinion polls, *US News & World Report* found that 52 per cent of Americans agree with the notion that every time they "start to feel good about the President, something negative comes up". This reflects a dichotomy between strong approval of the President's policies — especially his choice of the issues to be tackled — and scepticism, if not distrust, of Mr Clinton's personality.

In his weekly radio address on Saturday, Mr Clinton said that the projected budget deficit in 1995 is \$180 billion (\$120 billion), "lower even than our initial projections", which were for a deficit of \$241 billion.

In the State of the Union message he is expected to reiterate his optimism about the economy and renew his call on Congress to bring every American under a health insurance umbrella. It will also be the first occasion on which Mr Clinton will not only propose new policies in front of Congress but defend his own record.



Perdue gave details of an alleged affair

Heavy rain threatens to trigger mudslides

Los Angeles faces new misery

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

HOMELESS victims of last Monday's Los Angeles earthquake were coaxed out of makeshift encampments and into tent cities with room for 10,000 at the weekend as forecasts of heavy rain threatened new misery for the city in the shape of mudslides.

Army reservists worked flat out on Saturday to turn the San Fernando Valley's baseball ground into vast dormitories for the mainly black and Hispanic families who have refused or been unable to return to their homes. The decision to put up the tents, many of which saw service in Operation Desert Storm in the Gulf, was taken reluctantly in spite of the poor sanitation and likelihood of dysentery in the refugee camps. Tent cities put up after Hurricane Andrew hit Florida became semi-permanent, and police were eventually forced to evict some occupants.

The threat of mudslides comes from mountains denuded of vegetation in last November's bush fires.

Relief centres set up in Malibu and Topanga Canyon after the fires are still open and will try to meet any new emergency needs caused by mudslides, but another natural disaster now would overwhelm the already stretched resources of federal and state emergency management agencies.

Responding to angry criticism by earthquake victims, who queued for hours on Friday at "disaster application centres", only to be given appointments for mid-February, President Clinton released an additional \$283 million (\$190 million) in emergency relief funds on Saturday.

Henry Cisneros, the Secretary for Housing and Urban Development, defended the government's record since last Monday as faster and more comprehensive than the response to San Francisco's 1989 earthquake. After that disaster "five days out, not one single disaster application centre had been opened and not one person had been received into the system", Mr Cisneros said on NBC's *Today* programme yesterday.

By Saturday night 12 centres in the San Fernando Valley had received 17,000 applications for aid. Some applicants have already been given vouchers for new rented accommodation.

By Sunday the earthquake death toll had risen to 55. The estimated bill for repairs has remained steady at around \$30 billion.



Maria Perez peers out from her temporary home in the boot of her family's car in Winnetka Park, Northridge, one of the areas hit hardest by last week's earthquake

NEWS IN BRIEF

Telly Savalas dead at 70

New York Telly Savalas, 70, who died yesterday of prostate cancer, achieved such international fame as the lollipop-loving New York cop *Kojak* that even the Queen was a fan (James Bone writes). The answer to his trademark question: "Who loves ya, baby?" was more than 100 million viewers who watched the series in 75 countries.

The bald Lieutenant Theo Kojak of Manhattan South was known in Germany as "the lion without a mane" and in Australia as the "lolly-cop". The Queen so enjoyed the show that she invited Savalas to a party in Washington when she toured America to commemorate the country's bicentenary in 1976.

Only Peter Falk as Columbo can challenge Kojak's claim to be the most famous television cop. Savalas, the son of a Greek immigrant to America, believed Kojak's international fame rested on his everyman appeal. He said: "There's something that 99.9 per cent of the world's population have in common, and that fact is that they're ordinary and alike. In Telly, they see that ordinariness and that likeness, which in fact is theirs."

Obituary, page 19

Killed on duty

New York Fifty-six journalists were killed while working last year, the Committee to Protect Journalists said here. Most of the deaths were in Algeria, Bosnia, Somalia and the former Soviet republics, it said. Another 16 deaths are being investigated. (AP)

Hariri visit

Beirut Rafik Hariri, Lebanon's Prime Minister, has left on a four-day visit to Britain to try to attract investment to rebuild his country, ravaged by 15 years of civil war. His visit will be the first to the United Kingdom by a Lebanese leader since 1975. (AP)

Cheaper power

Rabat Morocco has abolished import duty on solar energy equipment and windmills used to generate electricity to encourage renewable energy sources. The country currently imports 90 per cent of its energy raw materials. (Reuters)

Gaddafi offer

Tripoli Colonel Muammar Gaddafi has suggested that the two Libyans wanted by the West for allegedly carrying out the 1988 Lockerbie bombing could be tried by the International Court of Justice in The Hague. (AFP)

Pardon at issue

Harare President Mugabe of Zimbabwe has been subjected to an unusual level of criticism for pardoning two officials imprisoned for shooting and nearly killing Patrick Kombo, an opposition politician, in 1990. (Reuters)

Crash kills five

Munich A bus carrying Bavarian tourists to a ski resort skidded off a motorway in the foothills of the German Alps, killing five and injuring 26, some seriously. The crash happened about 50 miles southeast of Munich. (Reuters)

New minister

Brussels Belgium's francophone Socialist Party replaced Guy Coenen, a deputy Prime Minister responsible for communications, who resigned over a corruption scandal, with Elio Di Rupo, formerly a regional minister. (Reuters)

Actor's pact

Los Angeles Burt Reynolds, 57, the actor, and Loni Anderson, 47, have agreed a divorce settlement giving her \$2 million (£1.3 million) and a holiday home. Custody of their adopted son Quinton, five, is yet to be arranged. (AP)

Peace hopes revive as PLO and Israel make headway

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN JERUSALEM

THERE were indications yesterday that the Middle East peace process was firmly back on track, as Israel appeared to make headway in its stalled talks with the Palestinians and prepared to resume dialogue with its Arab neighbours.

The most positive signs emerged from weekend contacts between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, which both reported progress after weeks of failed dialogue.

"I think we are plenty close to an agreement (with the PLO), but I prefer at this time not to enter into details," said Shimon Peres, the Israeli Foreign Minister, who met Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman, in Oslo on Saturday. "Things they said 'no' to yesterday, they can require study today."

Although neither the Israelis nor the Palestinians would elaborate, reports in Israel suggested that Mr Peres had offered the PLO a compromise package to resolve outstanding issues of security, sovereignty and territory. Israel has

apparently proposed to lower its profile at border crossings into the Palestinian autonomous regions and offered to let the Palestinians open a "tourist village" on the northern tip of the Dead Sea. The two sides were also said to be close to resolving security arrangements for Jewish settlers living in the Gaza Strip.

Mr Arafat, who embarked on a crucial fence-mending visit to Saudi Arabia yesterday, his first since the PLO backed Iraq in the Gulf War, said there were still points of difference but confirmed that the two sides had managed to overcome some obstacles.

Yitzhak Rabin, the Prime Minister, reiterated his offer to meet President Assad of Syria anywhere in the world to settle their half-decade of conflict. "I believe that such proposals were made ten times. I am ready to meet President Assad in Damascus, in Jerusalem, in any place on Earth in which we can meet to negotiate," the Israeli leader said, in a speech to 40 visiting American rab-

bis, who had just completed an unprecedented official visit to Jordan. "I don't put conditions to the meeting and I am not ready to accept conditions for such a meeting beyond what we are committed to."

Although Syria was in mourning over the weekend after the death of President Assad's son, Bassel, the government-controlled media confirmed that negotiations with Israel on a "land for peace" deal over the Golan Heights would be resumed as scheduled.

As President Assad's eldest son was buried on Saturday, in a funeral attended by several Arab leaders as well as 100,000 mourners, Syrians and diplomats expressed fears of political instability in Damascus.

In southern Lebanon a militiaman serving with the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army was killed when a roadside bomb was exploded near his foot patrol by guerrillas belonging to the pro-Iranian Hezbollah movement.

Firemen die in Argentine forest blaze

FROM AFP IN PUERTO MADRYN

TWENTY-ONE volunteer firefighters died at the weekend when they were trapped while trying to bring a forest fire under control in south-eastern Argentina.

Officials said a sudden wind shift caught the firemen off guard and they were caught in a ring of fire. Police said the toll might be higher because several people were missing. Victoriano Salazar, the mayor, declared three days of mourning in this port city of 55,000 people. Relatives milled about outside the city hall as bodies, some charred beyond recognition, were brought in from the forest.

More than 100 firemen, some just teenagers working as apprentices, fought 65 ft flames along a ten-mile front when the wind changed. At first it was believed that some of the firemen had retreated from the main front to a secondary one. "First we found their shovels, then their helmets, and finally their bodies," officials said.

Gunmen shoot 32 at Colombia rally

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN BOGOTÁ

GUNMEN, believed to be left-wing guerrillas, fired automatic weapons at political rivals in northwest Colombia yesterday, killing at least 32 and injuring eight, the authorities said.

The attack, in the town of Apartado, 300 miles from Bogotá, was the bloodiest in Colombia in more than five years. About 200 people have been killed in political violence in the past year in the Apartado region, where left-wing factions are vying for political control.

Ramón Gil, the acting Defence Minister, told reporters that the attack occurred after the victims, members of the Hope, Peace and Freedom Party founded by former guerrillas, held a rally to campaign for the national elections in March.

Señor Gil claimed that some of the victims had been picked according to a "death list" that the killers brought with them. Details of the purported death list were not immediately available.

Witnesses said about 20 gunmen, their faces daubed with camouflage paint, appeared as the party members were celebrating in the street. The gunmen, some wearing civilian clothes and others in uniform, surrounded the party members and opened fire, witnesses said.

"When I heard someone shout the guerrillas had arrived, I began to run and had to struggle with two of them. They could have killed me, but I managed to escape," Edward Salas told a radio reporter. He suffered a gunshot wound.

The killers were members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Farc), Señor Gil said. The group backs the Communist Party and the Patriotic Union Party, which risk losing political control over the region to the Hope, Peace and Freedom Party.

In November 1988, 43 people were killed by right-wing death squads in the western Colombian town of Segovia.

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British aid success sharpens Hurd's dilemma

By MICHAEL BONYON,
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR,
AND ANTHONY LOYD
IN VITEZ

DOUGLAS Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, who at the weekend toured the muddy, frozen barracks from which British troops guard the main aid route into central Bosnia, is to begin consultations with allied governments on whether to pull out British UN troops.

Britain is the political, diplomatic and military lynchpin of Western deployment in Bosnia. The main functioning route from the coast through the snow-covered mountains is maintained and patrolled by British forces. Any British decision on staying or leaving may be decisive in influencing others, such as the Spanish and Canadians, also in Bosnia. Aid agencies have issued warnings that without UN protection only a fraction of the essential aid is likely to get through the expected surge in fighting.

Before leaving Split on Saturday, Mr Hurd promised that British forces would remain throughout the winter and would not pull out unilaterally. His talks with military commanders, his

The Foreign Secretary has pledged that British troops will stay in Bosnia throughout the winter despite all obstacles. The final fate of the allied military and aid effort will be decided in the spring

drive along the precipitous "Route Diamond" road, backed through the mountains by British engineers, and his overnight stay in the spartan Vitez barracks have heightened his dilemma, however. The long-term arguments for withdrawal have been sharply undermined by the very success of British efforts to keep people alive.

Mr Hurd will fly late this month to America for talks with Boutros Boutros Ghali, the UN Secretary-General, and Warren Christopher, the American Secretary of State. He will also have talks with the French, Spanish and Canadian governments. His talks will be held against a background of growing dissatisfaction among aid agencies and military commanders with the political paralysis that has prevented any action by the allies. Lieutenant General Francis Briquembourg, the outgoing Belgian UN Protection Force commander, spoke yesterday of a

"fantastic crisis" caused by unimplemented resolutions and the need for more troops to protect convoys. Tomorrow the Canadian parliament will debate Canada's participation in peacekeeping.

Mr Hurd, his shoes caked in mud after his long drive through the winter landscape of pines, snowy mountains and frozen lakes, said Britain had done a "useful job" in keeping people alive. While no one has yet doubted the competence of the British battalion in attempting to fulfil the UN mandate, its effectiveness has been curtailed by the restrictions of both the mandate and situation.

To the Balkan warlords who control the fragmented land, aid is a weapon of war. While it piles high at the main UN warehouse at Metkovic on the Croatia-Herzegovina border, its journey inland across the vicious, factionalised front lines is wrought with obstruction. Though the mandate has



Mr Hurd being greeted at Split on his way to visit the British battalion in Vitez at the weekend

changed subtly from one of "escorting convoys" to one of "facilitating the delivery of aid" to allow the UN greater flexibility in its operations, the UN remains powerless in the face of simple roadblocks manned usually by ragged militiamen and their anti-tank mines, intent on preventing food reaching their enemies beyond. Nor is the UN responsible for the direct distribu-

tion of aid to the people who need it. This is the task of local authorities, often corrupt or controlled by the militias. The result is that too often it is only the affluent and the armed who are fed. "Once we've handed it (aid) over, we cannot stand guard over it," Larry Hollingworth, head of UNHCR depot for central Bosnia in Zenica, said. "If more than a small amount

goes into the army and some of it goes onto the black market we are furious, but there is very, very little we can do about it."

Belgrade: The National Bank of Yugoslavia will today release "super dinar" banknotes, backed by gold, intended to form the cornerstone of an economic recovery plan designed to combat hyperinflation. (Reuters)

New party vies for German protest vote

FROM ROGER BOYES
IN BONN

MANFRED Brunner, German champion of the anti-Maastricht cause, triggered controversy yesterday by setting up the Association of Free Citizens, a centre-right party that will contest European and general elections.

Dr Brunner's initiative has rattled established parties like the ruling Christian Democrats (CDU) and its coalition partner, the small Free Democrats, who fear that the former European Community aide will absorb hundreds of thousands of protest votes. Some politicians are also saying that the party will be used by the far right as a covert way into parliament.

In an interview at the weekend, Dr Brunner fiercely denied that charge. "We will turn away from a matter of fundamental principle all former republicans or former members of parties from the extreme fringes of the political spectrum." Nonetheless, Dr Brunner's close friendship with Jörg Haider, an Austrian nationalist who has praised Hitler's employment policies, has raised the suspicion that he is out to catch the many conservatives who are dissatisfied with the CDU.

Herr Haider estimates that Dr Brunner could win about 15 per cent of the vote. "He has good chances at the European elections and if he wants me to, I am prepared to give him my full support."

The party is only one of a number of protest parties that have been springing up to profit from widespread disillusionment with the mainstream parties. In Hamburg, the Stadt Party, composed mainly of disaffected Christian Democrats, won a critical chunk of the votes in state elections and now plans to expand nationwide. These parties claim that they are good for democracy because they are aimed at representing people who might otherwise refuse to vote or who might cast their ballots for the far-right Republicans.

Dr Brunner's party is given the best chance of success. Its programme is not much different from Dr Brunner's former party, the Free Democrats: it is strongly for the free market, for restraining state interference in everyday life, and for deregulation. But, unlike the established parties, it is firmly against a single European currency. That may prove to be the big vote winner in the European elections.

"Opinion poll researchers have told me that 85 per cent of Germans reject the Ecu, yet all the established parties are for it," Dr Brunner said. Only the extreme right has so far made a rallying call out of the defence of the mark.

Rome: A breakaway group from the old Christian Democrats launched a new centre-right party, the Christian Democrat Centre, after the relaunch of their former party as the Popular Party. Italian neo-Fascists also launched the National Alliance to soften their extremist image and challenge the left in the March general election. (Reuters)

Briton takes command of UN force in Bosnia

By JOEL BRAND IN SARAJEVO AND
MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE arrival yesterday of a British general with a legendary reputation to take command of United Nations forces in Bosnia has raised expectations of a tough approach in dealing with the obstructive warlords from the three factions.

The achievements of Lieutenant General Sir Michael Rose, the 54-year-old former SAS chief, will, however, depend much more on the vagaries of his political masters in New York and in European capitals than his personal instincts and judgments in the field. "Too many UN generals have already fallen foul of the vacillating mood of the policy-makers, many of whom have never visited Bosnia-Herzegovina."

In many ways commanding 12,000 UN troops in Bosnia is an impossible mission, especially now that governments are talking openly of withdrawing in the spring or early summer. The hint of a UN pullout will make the civilian victims of the war even more antagonistic towards the troops.

UN officers could do no more yesterday than visit the Sarajevo suburb where six children were killed on Saturday while they were out to-

gaining and playing with snowballs. The Serbs are assumed to have been behind the attack, although this has been denied.

The UN has no response when Serbs shell civilians, even children. Their mission is just to feed the people, if the Serbs will allow it. Everyone in Sarajevo knows if the UN leaves the only difference is that no one will confirm the calibre of the shells.

A blood-stained wooden sled sat awkwardly parked, ten yards from the fresh mortar crater, conspicuously abandoned. It could be used to transport water, to play on or to be burned for warmth. Even in Sarajevo no one can take such a thing. On Saturday, the snow-white fields and parking lot in front of building number 5 were filled with children playing. The first mortar shell fell beyond the children, sending them scurrying for cover. The second shell landed right in their tracks as they headed for a block of flats, killing four and wounding three others. A third shell killed two more.

Four children were killed yesterday during a mortar attack on a playground in the Croat-held region of Mostar in southwest Bosnia. Sir other people were wounded.

The UN proposed yesterday that an inspector should be appointed to maintain discipline among its peacekeepers after a UN investigation confirmed charges of black-marketeering and other abuses by UN forces.

Belgrade: Serbs in the breakaway Krajina region of Croatia voted yesterday in a run-off presidential election whose importance has been heightened by a rapprochement pact between Belgrade and Zagreb. Milan Maric, who is backed by President Milosevic of Serbia, is running against Milan Babic, a former President of the self-proclaimed Republic of Serb Krajina. (Reuters)



Rose, former SAS commander-in-chief

Air strike call, page 1



A sledge decorated with flowers stands as a forlorn testament to the six children killed by a shell while playing in the snow on Saturday in the Sarajevo suburb of Alipasno Polje. It is believed that the mortar was fired from Serb positions, although Serbs have denied this

Lights dim for Barrault, eagle of French stage

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN PARIS

THE theatres of Paris dimmed their lights and paid tribute at the weekend to Jean-Louis Barrault, the eagle-eyed actor-director whose grace soared over the French stage for a half century.

Louis XIV was the Sun King. Barrault was a Sun Actor who illuminated everything he touched in that great festival which is theatre. Francis Huster, a fellow actor, told the audience before a performance at the Marigny theatre on the Champs Elysees, the house which Barrault made famous in the 1950s, along with his wife Madeleine Renaud. Barrault died in his sleep on Saturday aged 83.

Similar tributes were voiced across the Seine on the stage at the Odéon, the state-financed theatre which Barrault ran until he was dismissed in 1968 by André Malraux, President de Gaulle's Culture Minister. He had allowed occupation by rioting students and had sent a message to the government saying: "I am your servant, but not your valet." Barrault was long ago forgiven by the Gaullists and Edmond Balladur, the Prime Minister, called him "one of the greatest figures of French culture in this century."

Barrault was best known abroad as Baptiste, the mime in Marcel Carné's 1944 film *Les Enfants du Paradis* - a work which many consider the greatest in the French cinema. Yesterday, Carné, who is now 87, called Barrault a "fanatic of the theatre" who to his credit did not despise cinema. Asked once why he preferred the stage to cinema, Barrault replied:

"Because I prefer to make love in bed rather than by correspondence."

Even more than for Laurence Olivier, his British equivalent, the stage had been Barrault's obsession since the 1930s when he teamed up with Renaud, his companion in the French theatre's most celebrated partnership.

Barrault said he founded his company to bring new light after the "winter of German occupation." He was remembered as a classical technician - his Hamlet of the 1940s was the last on the stage of the Comédie Française, and Offenbach's *La Vie Parisienne* was one of his specialties.

Friends said Barrault, the son of a suburban chemist, had lost his appetite for life since old age forced him and Renaud to leave the theatre, the "enterprise of joy" as he described the profession.

A few years ago, Barrault said he had dreamed of his death, describing his soul departing like a "wisp of smoke spiralling from a pretty English cigarette." He was found dead in his Paris flat by Amidou, his Moroccan servant. "I broke the news very gently to Madame, who was in the next room. But she hasn't really been able to take it in yet."

Renaud, who is 93, had spent the previous day lying beside her husband "as if they were expecting something to happen," the servant said. In a 1984 book, Renaud wrote: "If I had been a man, I would have wanted to be like Jean-Louis - a man with no flaw in his humanity, zero faults of the heart."

Austrian leader must choose mistress or job

FROM DOUGLAS HAMILTON IN VIENNA

PRESIDENT Klesil of Austria, under pressure to choose between his mistress and his job, yesterday promised to sort out his personal problems and end a growing scandal without delay.

Herr Klesil's wife, Edith, left him this month because of his relationship with Margot Loeffler, a Foreign Ministry aide whose duties brought her close to the President. "My private problems have not become easier," he told Sunday's mass-circulation *Neue Kronen-Zeitung*, "but it's in my very own best interest to solve them quickly."

Herr Klesil, 61, a career diplomat allied to the conservative People's Party, was elected President in 1992, replacing Kurt Waldheim, whose term of office was overshadowed by allegations of war crimes. Rumours of a split between him and his wife were kept dark by an unusually restrained tabloid press until he admitted last week that his wife had moved out after 37 years of marriage.

A day later photographs of Frau Loeffler were splashed across front pages. Now, with wild reports of a "love oest" in the federal presidency office

for military emergencies, the scandal has become fully blown, with suggestions in the media that Frau Loeffler be given some foreign embassy post far away from Vienna.

"Thomas Klesil must decide. Either he wants to enjoy private life with his female colleague or continue in office," Maria Graff, a member of the People's Party women's

group, said at the weekend. She said Herr Klesil had won the presidential election by using his wife to portray himself as a happy family man, "which was not true."

"This was a dirty trick to play on the Austrian people," Frau Graff said, adding that the President should have resolved his "hormone crisis" with his wife. (Reuters)

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Klesil: admitted his wife had moved out

It is strangely reassuring to be told by the Yard that we have criminal geniuses in our midst

More tea, Mr Moriarty?

Ugh. Dull, enervating January weather, with nothing but February to look forward to. What we need is a new parlour-game to keep us alert and happy. So God bless Scotland Yard, who, through a "source" last week, have provided us with just the thing. Pick the Villain, we may call it: an age-old game, related to Beggar my Neighbour by way of Spot the Ball.

Now, thanks to the Yard, it is updated and made available for the enlightenment of select kitchen-supper parties, and for those arid marital evenings when *Middlemarch* is between episodes, both parties have thick coats and the most innocuous conversation always seems to come round to the shortcomings of the family budget and is therefore best not embarked upon.

What the "source", also referred to as a "senior police officer", said was that there are in Britain some 400 "Mr Bigs": top crooks, Napoleons of crime, manipulators of lesser villains and generals of gang warfare. And—here's the beauty of it—these 400 have invented themselves façades so respectable that it is virtually

impossible to spot them. They may appear to have made their money in honest ways, but underneath they are violent, unscrupulous, and treacherous crime-lords who may well have started out as armed robbers. Listen to this: "Their discreet houses have well-tended lawns", said the report. "They support the local church fête... their children attend all the right schools, they may even be school governors."

Whoopie! Surely I am not alone in welcoming the idea of a leavening of Moriarties in our cosy, middle-class midst? Not that one endorses crime, you understand; it is just that after years of balefully wondering how our neighbours seem so well-off compared with us, we now have permission to surmise that they are international villains rather than just good managers and sensible savers. Which is a relief.

Is it not delightful to ponder the sinister side of the golf club committee? To consider all those affable red-faced chaps with ride-on lawnmowers, who may never have seen the inside of a prison (except perhaps, piquantly, on JP training courses); men who have no scars, no dark glasses, not even a sheepskin car-coat, and yet who hide dark secrets Conan Doyle would be proud of? Those school governors, vice-commodores and churchwardens who started out in life with nothing but a shooter and a easy nature, and who may any minute get the Five Orange Pips at the breakfast-table?

Their great skill, said the obliging Yard man, is "to make the source of the money look legitimate, and so they create



LIBBY PURVES

paperwork to show that they have made that money". Things have moved on from the Agatha Christie world in which all you had to do was statter around a few Benares brass elephants and claim to have made money out East.

Today it could be "haulage, retail, commodities, property" or something charmingly vague like "Europe". But all the time it is very dodgy money indeed which they are doing

ing to the new Scout hut and spending the garden centre. You see why I am so thrilled?

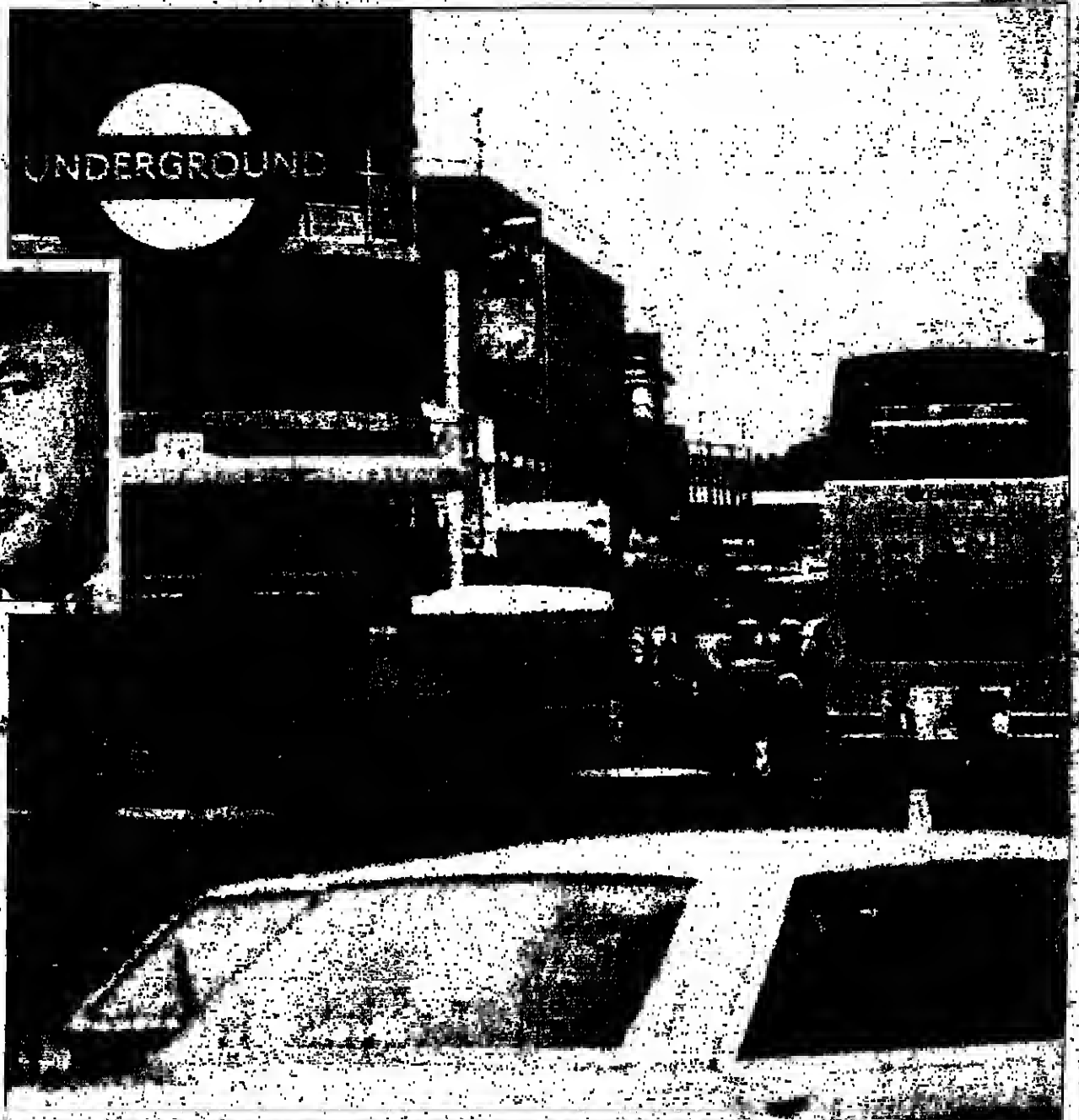
me where the money comes from." This discontented obligato generally continues: "... I mean, he's not that bright, she only mucks about with that craft shop, but there they are, that huge house, four at boarding-school and skiing against Sarah saw their curtain material two months later in a sale, and it was still forty quid a metre — hand-blocked. Perhaps there's money on her side of the family? They keep pretty quiet about it."

Since these speculations are generally voiced by people so ill-at-ease with actual finance that they get lost two minutes into *Monopoly* and need their teenage children beside them as they heavy-breathe their way through *Weekend Money*, it used to be possible to conclude these speculative sessions with: "Well, it must be Lloyd's." Now that this explanation seems less

likely, we have been brought perilously close to admitting that our strangely rich acquaintances are just cleverer, better-paid and less wasteful than ourselves. Which is a lowering reflection.

But no longer. We may now comfortably assume that they are closet Mr Bigs, forever sending off coded messages to secret henchmen with flat noses and sawn-off shotguns, and laundering Old Masters in the backstreets of Amsterdam when they pretend to be in Gstaad. Sometimes we may get flabbergasted confirmation, as in a very curious remark dropped, in a northern County last winter, by a deputy Lord Lieutenant to his local MP: "If you get any trouble with the hunt sabs, do call me. I know some chaps who could help to... ah... explain things to them."

In search of Southgate Man



Changing times in Southgate: a quiet village street in Middlesex at the turn of the century (left) and (right) a traffic-choked suburban highway, in which little seems to have survived. Inset, Michael Portillo

The only compromise we've made

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Anything else is a compromise

Michael Portillo called for a crusade to revitalise our institutions: Matthew d'Ancona went to his constituency to find out if anyone is answering the call

neighbourhood, the civic sense and No Nonsense of the place. This ethos has survived in many respects. As you approach Southgate from Muswell Hill, the Montessori nurseries give way to residential homes. There are fewer chic restaurants. The people on the streets are older and more likely to be off to a Rotary Club gathering than a Charter 88 meeting.

Yet the sleeping giant is deceptive, disguising the various dislocations which have left Southgate in a curious limbo. There is less stability here than one might suppose. It is a place of shifting, fluid boundaries.

In 1965, the borough of Southgate ceased to be part of Middlesex and was absorbed by the new Enfield local authority. The council has kept the name Middlesex as an ornament on its road signs — but the tug of the metropolis is a more powerful force.

A lot of older people are still not happy about the move out of Middlesex, says Marilyn Ashby, a member of the local Tory association and retired executive. "It was a question of wanting to live outside London. We weren't part of it, but we certainly are now. Life has got faster."

But Southgate's borders have not only moved over the years. They have also become permeable. Few in the borough of Enfield complain that its schools attract pupils from other areas. They are less sure about the homeless families that have flocked here to find cheap accommodation; nor are they happy about the flight of investment from the area's manufacturing base. Unemployment is already much higher than the London average. "We're in danger of becoming an inner-city area outside the inner city," one Tory councillor says.

Compared with other parts of London, the area also offers fewer institutions to cling to. There has never been a significant trade union presence here, nor strong regimental links. Though a few hundred still turn out to cheer on Enfield Football Club in its Diadora League matches, most support teams outside the old borough. The biggest sporting draw in Southgate is still Saracens rugby club, but the team has plans to move out of the area.

As change accelerates, so does the yearning for stability. Southgate has a booming nostalgia industry. Alan DuMayne, the acknowledged expert on the area, has sold 14,000 copies of his three local history books; talks on the subject can attract audiences of 400 or more.

To some extent, of course, this reflects a longing for a sense of community that no longer exists. Changes in patterns of everyday life mean that a working person may be more likely to identify with his workplace than with his locale. The Reverend Christopher Foster, vicar of Christ Church in Southgate for the

past seven years, doubts that the idea of a revived "community" has much meaning.

"In what sense is there such a thing?" he asks. "People talk about Southgate village, but there are few focal points. Local government doesn't give us one. The Church is one of the few things that might play that role — but I wouldn't want to over-emphasise that point." Christ Church has a healthy congregation of 300 on a Sunday. But Mr Foster argues that boom and recession have shifted the focus of his parishioners' lives away from the neighbourhood to the home and the office.

Yet as communities fragment they also seek new forms of cohesion. Schools, in particular, seem to be assuming the role played by churches a century ago as the natural focus of local loyalty. Parents have been given powers to run or even set up their own schools; heads have been granted independence. Pupil catchment areas are the new parish boundaries.

Southgate schools never have trouble filling vacancies on their governing bodies. Broomfield School, which opted out of town hall control in September, is typical. According to its head, Ian Lucas, the change has strengthened neighbourhood bonds. "There is a sense among people that it is their school," he says. "The local shopkeepers come in regularly. You get known as a head and people stop and talk to you."

But the strongest expression of corporate identity in Southgate is to be found in its conservationist campaigns. The borough of Enfield has at least ten green or preserva-

tionist organisations committed to the protection of the local environment. There is no green politics to speak of in Southgate, this is a more elemental concern, binding old age pensioners to housewives to younger activists, a culture which permeates the life of the old borough.

"It's the greenness that defines the area," says Richard Wilmut, organiser of a petition to save an area in Oakthorpe Road from development. "It's an important issue for citizens who wouldn't normally be involved in environmental campaigning groups. They are often the most vociferous."

There are local and historic reasons for the stirring of this conservationist instinct in Southgate: it has a tradition of responsible greenery and resistance to development. Yet the search for a sense of community in these conservationist issues is not peculiar to the area; it reflects a growing civic concern in Britain's cities and suburbs about the quality of the environment. The political philosopher John Gray has argued that the next phase of British Conservatism will be greening it. Southgate Man would probably agree with him.

There are no straightforward answers to the questions posed by Mr Portillo. There are no obvious levers which a politician may pull to revive the nation's morale. Yet the dynamics of his own constituency suggest that the fragmentation, dislocation and cynicism he described in his speech are only half the picture. Under pressure, communities find new expression for their concerns, new ways to rebuild themselves. This is the challenge that national politicians must rise to; and heading back from Southgate to the heart of Government, you can almost hear the new platoons begin their quiet march.

Leader, page 17

Putting on the glitz



Bold, bright and best of all: **CHRISTIAN LACROIX** a gown which screams glamour



Metallics add a sheen: **VERSACE** tough-looking toga dresses **LACROIX** mixing the metals **CHANEL** tarnished silver shadowed with chiffon



Fiery reds and oranges: **CHANEL** Lagerfeld's flaming daywear **YVES SAINT LAURENT** chiffon layers ignite the catwalk **VERSACE** satin sheath sees red



Graphic stripes, abstract swirls: **DIOR** spinning-top stripes **CHANEL** black and white dappled ensemble **GUY LAROCHE** fisherman's tunic with a twist



Romantic and antiqued: **DIOR** coffee cream confectionery **VALENTINO** slips of next to nothing **LACROIX** lace and fineness

After years of minimalism and bare faces, haute couture has rediscovered unashamed glamour

In the mid-1980s haute couture led the way forward for fashion. It lit the route with bright ideas, created, for the most part, by one man, Christian Lacroix. It was Lacroix who illuminated the ready-to-wear market with his energetic mix of paintbox colours, and garish patterns. He became fashion's new hope.

The influence of Lacroix, and therefore by extension the 1980s "dress-for-excess" ethic lost its sheen. Understatement became the fashion statement. Hemlines dropped. Supermodels were usurped by their little sisters. Superstar make-overs looked obvious and offensive compared with subtle, bare-faced beauty. And couture? Couture just seemed to have lost the plot.

But fashion twists and turns, and hemlines are once again rising, heels are high, and everyone is talking about the return of glamour, of modern romance, of...

During last week's couture shows for spring/summer 1994, it was Christian Lacroix who received a standing ovation for his new collection. Deservedly so. The lavish workmanship was as breath-

taking as ever. However, what made his collection great was the way he once again embraced fashion, working its motifs into the weary world of haute couture. A handwoven pastel plaid coat, cut with the flute of an upturned champagne glass, seemed simply chic. Teamed with a pair of metallic leather shorts, and sequined T-shirt, it looked brave and fresh. Throughout the show, equally unexpected combinations fused with fabulous results.

"I wanted to return to some of my excesses", Lacroix wrote in the show's programme. "The mixtures of materials, prints, woven fabrics, colours, directly borrowed from street culture. A cross-bred look, devoid of the taboos of so-called good taste."

It is this multiracial mix, this melding of ideas, which identifies fashion as modern, and fills it with the spirit of the moment. This season, the very best moments of couture were overflowing with ideas consistent with fashion's mood: skirts were short; fabrics were fluid; and the singular inspiration for designers was a perverse diversity.

Six designers brandished the same handful of allusions,

yet each managed to create collections revealing his personal taste, and fashion forte: Gianni Versace (ultra-modern), Valentino (romantic), Karl Lagerfeld for Chanel (wacky), Gianfranco Ferré for Dior (flamboyant), Michel Klein for Guy Laroche (intellectual) and Lacroix (eclectic).

Each responded to the moment, slickly patchworking together apparently disparate references (mostly the years of the Parisian Directoire); futuristic metallics; tea-stained lace; bold graphics; pretty pastels; fiery shades; drapery; lingerie; cigarette girls and, in Versace's case, home-boys.

Versace transformed the bit n' brace fastening of dungarees into haute couture, with a

collection blending old and new. Sensuous bias-cut sheaths shared the spotlight with liquid-silver mini dresses and suits, invariably hanging from the tough-looking straps. Even his overblown baggows were held up in the same way. Hard-edged couture for the 1990s.

Fellow Italian Valentino created impeccably pretty dresses, as featherweight as the skimpiest lingerie. Tea-stained, or what? Valentino refers to as "orionskin", silk was cut into floppy slip dresses. These were often topped by sheer jackets, which save for impeccable beadwork and embroidery, would almost have been invisible. Quite, quite stunning.

Despite the deliberately foolish attention-seeking an-

tics favoured by Karl Lagerfeld, he actually showed some really great daytime suits in the collection he creates for Chanel.

Lagerfeld followed his Chanel ready-to-wear line, offering long, lean jackets over short, sharp skirts. Michel Klein also created some great short looks for Guy Laroche. Strong clean shapes are favourite with Klein, so his tunics over pants, and tiny mini skirts, had a fashionably stark feel.

Eveningwear was equally reserved (for couture), the best being darkly shaded Eastern-inspired beaded kaftans over trousers, and his wraparound column dresses.

Gianfranco Ferré sculpts fabric like a magician. For Dior, in a collection called, "Summer Paradox", he used every trick. A collar swirled into vast and slender on an empire-line sheath; and billowing bustles exploded from behind a seemingly slender silhouette. Like Lacroix, Ferré is also a fan of excess. Even the spiky heels of the model's shoes were beaded beyond belief.

In 1994, haute couture may not appear terribly tasteful, or particularly politically correct for that matter, but as the fashion pendulum already begins to swing back from basics and heads in the direction of the glamorous and theatrical, it might as well brighten the journey.



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Matthew Parris



A giant dugout canoe is the unlikely vehicle for one of the most exciting short journeys you will find anywhere

We left Mapiri by canoe. Three hours and 30 miles later we arrived — wet, sunburnt and exhilarated — in Guanay. This was the happiest and most exciting short journey of my life.

Mapiri is a one-horse town — two, in fact. I counted. It lies on the banks of the Rio Mapiri at the point where that river pauses after its headlong rush 12,000ft down the sides of the Andes, eddies a while in pools and mudbanks, and makes up its mind to be a grown-up river. The town sits at the toes of the Andes, the Amazon basin before it, the Andean peaks — Illimapu, 21,000ft — snow-capped and visible behind it. One great long leg of the mountains extends from Illimapu down to Mapiri: a 30-mile ridge down which we had just walked in a week's trek about which I hope to write later.

Mapiri is a goldmining town, for a minor gold rush is on in the Andes at present. Behind its cobbled streets are the shops and stalls where they will sell you picks, rope, carbon lamps and dynamite. It's a friendly place, full of little tin-shack restaurants where you can pay in gold; bespectacled gentlemen behind desks with delicate weighing machines; and smiling prostitutes in the doorways. Here, too, gold will do nicely. The generator stops at 10pm. After that, only the hiss of Telly lamps and the whine of mosquitoes disturbs the heavy tropical night. Oh — and the dogs. A very randy Pekinese must once have holidayed in Mapiri. All the dogs are half-Pekinese. At our lodging-house (mud-walled cells with tin beds and one sheet, for a dollar a night) a captive monkey plays with a Pekinese while green parrots watch, fascinated.

A captive monkey plays with a Pekinese while green parrots watch, fascinated.

Eighty miles down the Mapiri river lies Guanay: another, bigger, gold-rush town. There is a track, of sorts: only half the distance, for the river twists and turns; but the track takes six hours. How to do twice the distance in half the time — and smoothly?

Here's how. Huge canoes, powered by huge outboard motors, leave at 9am. They take up to 25 passengers, plus cargo. The fare is \$5 (equivalent) downstream, or \$7 back. It takes two-and-a-half to three hours down, four to five hours back.

We selected our canoe — two were leaving that morning, but we had met a friend of the captain of one of the night before, and settled on his. Clambering down the steep mudbanks at the end of the main street, we wondered what to expect. A quay? An office? There was only the river. Swirling

spine. The outboard was hand-pulled into action, and we were off.

For half an hour we roared between the banks, shooting and re-shooting the rapids, collecting a couple more passengers and some extra cargo. Then the captain (at the stern) operating with his mate standing precariously on the bows holding only a rope, turned the nose into the downstream and we were away.

The speed was incredible. To the river's boiling, eddying 5-15mph, the motor added 15-20mph of its own. At 30mph-plus, then, we raced round bends, through gorges, under trees, the jungle crowding in on each bank, new rivers, some green, some red, some clear, rushing in to join us, parrots and enormous butterflies flapping across our path, waves splashing in, and women and children washing earth for gold on the riverside staring as we flashed past.

The canoe seemed only just stable. It felt more like surfing than boating. The sky was the most brilliant blue, the hills flanking the river gorges were the deepest, richest green. Slowly, the river widened, the pace slackened, and the quayside of Guanay came into view. I have never, never wished so much that a journey could go on for ever.

Analysis of last week's newspapers both confirms and confounds government misgivings

Conservative ministers now have the newspapers; some of them are quite hysterical. Their feelings are even more intense than those of ministers in the early 1960s during the Profumo scandal, or in the late 1960s during the darkest days of the Wilson government. At receptions I notice that some Conservative politicians, when they catch my eye, search hastily for a tray of canapés in the farthest corner of the room. Heaven knows how they behave when they see Paul Johnson or Simon Heffer. I suppose they dive under the nearest table.

Last Friday, at the end of a dreadful fortnight for the Government, I bought all the London morning newspapers, and *The Spectator*, to compare their political coverage. It was not a particularly political day. The one big scoop was *Today's* front-page story: "Jackson buys off Jorj for £30 million."

At least three of the broadsheets had some discussion of the power of the press. Conor Cruise O'Brien wrote an article for *The Independent* on "the abuse of power for fun", dealing with the withdrawal of Admiral Bob Inman from nomination as US Secretary of Defence. He asked who would check the abuses of the press, as the press checks the abuses of the politicians.

In the *Financial Times* Joe Rogaly was asking a similar question. He was critical both of the politicians and of the newspapers, though he considered that the newspapers have been sucked into a political vacuum. "When ministers misuse their powers, the ordinary citizen is helpless. One solution, as we have seen over the past year, is a strong, brash, intrusive and angry media. It is not a solution he likes, indeed he much prefers the House of Lords as a corrective to the failures of the House of Commons. The trouble with the House of Lords is that it is not sufficiently 'strong, brash, intrusive

Who's afraid of the big bad press?

and angry". *The Guardian* also discussed this problem of press power. It referred in a leading article to "media-intimidated political parties and public authorities".

Some journalists are showing concern about the way we use the power of the media. Conor Cruise O'Brien is undoubtedly right to see that it is an international problem. He is also right to warn about "the pressures of a television-dominated culture, of which both politicians and the print media are now part".

When one reads all the daily newspapers, how unfair do they seem to the Government, if indeed they are unfair? Last Friday — and it was only a sample day — the Government did not have much to complain about from the tabloids. *The Sun* had a page two lead "Scandal-hit PM delays vote on gay sex", which gave an anti-Major spin to the age-of-consent story. The new editor of *The Sun* may or may not make a difference to its political judgment. *The Daily Mirror* had an anti-Government leader and a couple of news stories written from a normal Opposition point of view.

The Daily Mail, now very critical, happened not to have any significant criticism on Friday. *The Daily Express* is consistently friendly and had no criticism at all. *The Daily Star* is not a political newspaper, and had no criticism. *Today* had an interesting leading article, "A speech of pure fiction", attacking Virginia Bottomley's handling of the NHS.

The broadsheets had a number of articles which were hostile to the Government. *The Guardian* provided its usual coverage and comment from a left-of-centre point of view; even the most sensitive ministers do not complain about that. *The Financial Times* had no significant complaints, apart from Joe Rogaly's article. *The Independent* had a serious and well argued attack by Andrew Marr on British policy

William Rees-Mogg

towards Bosnia: he wrote of the potential withdrawal: "Whatever that would mean for Bosnia, it would be a bloody awful day for Britain. Loudly we'd say: 'We did what we could.' But we would know that we did not." If people took Bosnia as seriously as they should, that might have been very damaging.

The Times had two pieces which would come into this discussion. Bernard Levin denounced Michael Portillo's speech, and dismissed the Government in an unqualified assault. His article was a powerful one; his underlying message that the Government has been around too long, and should go, no doubt has wide support among the electorate.

From the Government's point of view the most helpful piece of the day was Valerie Grove's interview with Diane Yeo, who emerged as a strong, intelligent and sympathetic woman. Not surprisingly, this interview was widely lifted by other newspapers in their later editions. Unfortunately Saturday's newspapers were running the story of Mr Yeo's lunch at Langens Brasserie with Miss Stent.

The most important criticism from John Major's point of view was a leading article in *The Daily Telegraph* which had all the air of being written by the editor himself. Max Hastings, like Lord Whitelaw, has the instincts of a loyalist. In contrast to *The Sunday Telegraph*, he has made sure that *The Daily Telegraph* under his editorship has been as sympathetic as it could reasonably be to the Government. His considered criticism is that of an unhappy friend, not that of someone long since disillusioned. In the same issue he ran a long article by Douglas Hurd on the future of NATO — an interesting but an Establishment feature.

His leading article supported the continuation of Mr Major's leadership, if only on probation, but had this devastating comment: "Mr Major's response to the future over back to basics was inept; his handling of his colleagues has been weak. As a result the Government appears not only divided, but also more incompetent and out of touch than ever." To lose the confidence of Lord Whitelaw and Max Hastings in one week is a

catastrophe for a Conservative Government. They represent the loyal centre of the Conservative Party.

The sharpest attacks of all were in *The Spectator*. But *The Spectator* has been in opposition for a long time. Simon Heffer, probably the most damaging of the Government's press critics, quotes an unnamed minister as saying that there will be a "wipeout" in the local and European elections in May and June. "There's no point putting in a new leader before these disasters," Paul Johnson opined for Michael Portillo as the next leader and asks: "Why wait?" *The Spectator* has a circulation of 46,000, large for a weekly of its type, and is read by most other commentators. The magazine may now have more political influence than at any time since Ian Macleod was editor in the 1960s. It is the journal of opinion of the intellectual right wing: the attacks which strike home are coming from the radical right and not from the left.

What conclusions can one draw? Journalists are used to the defensive anger of ministers but are worried by the unusual prominence of the press as the only effective opposition. Their criticism seems to be reactive and spontaneous, rather than a collective campaign. Individual newspapers are commenting in their own way on the political news, with some much more reluctant than others to publish strong attacks. There is an inevitable consciousness of power but also some fear that the press might be overreaching itself and might have to pay for its presumption. From the Conservative Government's point of view, the loss of three leading newspapers of Conservative sympathies, *The Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Mail* and *The Sun* — owned by three different groups — is particularly ominous. As *The Daily Telegraph* leader expressed it: "If John Major is to regain the country's confidence, he must first win back his natural supporters."

A long wait for leadership

Labour still does not convince as an alternative, says Peter Riddell



Is Labour fit to govern? At the 1983 election, the answer was "are you joking?". In 1987, and still in 1992, it was "the party has not yet changed enough". If, as I argued a week ago, the Tories are at last running out of luck and time, whether under John Major or someone else, then the character of the alternative is crucial. Britain needs a credible government in waiting.

Labour has changed a lot since 1979. The far left is not extinct, but it is marginal. The unions retain a say but are not dominant. There is no longer a running battle over defence and Europe. Neil Kinnock pushed the left aside, and after 1987, backed "modernisation" — Clintonism with a British accent.

Mr Smith has been more opaque. He is temperamentally more in tune with traditional "labourism" with its roots in the public sector and the unions. Unlike Mr Kinnock, a left-winger by origin, Mr Smith, a lifelong right-winger, is popular with the left. He is keen to keep all factions content. But that risks blurring choices, both on policy and on strategy. He refuses even to discuss the possible involvement of the Liberal Democrats if a Labour government is to have broad support, or even to survive if it is in minority.

The Labour leader referred last September to the extension of workers' rights, to win union support for the key conference decision on one member one vote. While his advisers talked about giving individual workers greater certainty in a more fluid labour market, some union leaders saw his speech as reopening talks about repeal of the labour laws of the 1980s. This not only frightens business but also provides much-needed ammunition for the Tories.

Labour has been cautious on taxes.

Kenneth Clarke's shifty performance on television yesterday shows how vulnerable the Tories are following confirmation by the Treasury of the recent report in *The Times* that from April most people will pay a higher proportion of their income in tax than when Labour was last in power. The row is a vindication of Gordon Brown's concentration on the Tories' tax record. But that does not answer the Tories' claim that, while they have reluctantly had to raise taxes, Labour has an inbred preference for higher spending and taxes. Mr Brown's repeated argument that Labour would not tax and spend for its own sake was criticised last year for being too negative, but its merits are now clearer. In Mr Brown's view, Labour has to establish a new trust on tax with the public before any decisions

on tax rates are taken. He and David Blunkett have emphasised the need for people to see the link between taxes paid and benefits received. All that Labour can realistically hope for is to reduce the big advantage which the Tories have enjoyed on taxes at past elections. In power, Labour could hardly avoid some higher taxes. The key is justifying them.

The most divisive question could be economic management. Unlike his predecessor, Mr Smith has often talked about full employment. He has recently said that this is not a precise target or guarantee, but a goal of ensuring the highest possible number of fulfilling jobs. The party's private polls show that the public is

highly sceptical about detailed promises on full employment. But Mr Smith's reference has been taken by critics of Mr Brown's fiscal caution as a chance to press for a more expansionist approach. This links with European policy, where differences have been largely obscured by Tory rows. The leadership still supports managed exchange rates, while leaving vague any commitment about returning to the exchange-rate mechanism or about a single currency. But a vocal minority disagrees.

A Labour Cabinet could easily be split on whether to pursue an anti-inflation policy compatible with European moves towards a single currency or whether to opt for a growth strategy which might push down the pound. The former group might be led by Mr Brown and Tony

Blair and the latter by Robin Cook and John Prescott, backed by Bryan Gould and the left from the back benches. Tensions could also arise about how to deal with pay claims by public-sector unions which would be eager to catch up after the current squeeze. Mr Smith's instincts are in the direction of the Brown/Blair group, but his reluctance to commit himself could store up trouble in office.

A Smith Cabinet would obviously be inexperienced, since the party has been so long in opposition. But that may be less of a disadvantage, given the staidness and inadequacies of the Tory front bench. The key players on the domestic side would be Messrs Brown, Blair and Cook, supported by Donald Dewar, George Robertson and Jack Straw, with Mr Prescott as a wild card, energetic but unpredictable. And Roy Hattersley, Gerald Kaufman and Mr Kinnock (if he does not go to Brussels) could also be involved. That does not compare badly with the core of the first Wilson Cabinet, though both in 1964 and now there are big weaknesses further down. But, unlike then, there is now nobody like Roy Jenkins or Anthony Crosland waiting to be promoted.

A Labour government may no longer frighten either the horses or the voters. But would it make a difference? Mr Smith sometimes behaves as if looking reassuring (that is, not being Mr Kinnock) and respectable (in contrast to Tory seediness) is enough. He has talked radically about democratic renewal and constitutional change, but seldom on other issues. He admires the quiet shrewdness and determination of Attlee and the political skills of Lord Wilson at his peak in 1963-66. Ben Pincket described the response to Wilson's "technological revolution" speech: "Just as Mrs Thatcher in the late 1970s managed to strike a chord among many normal Labour supporters, so in 1963 there were plenty of Tories who found a great deal in Wilson's speech to agree with." Mr Smith has so far failed to inspire similar hopes with most Labour supporters, let alone with any Tories.

Grey at the roots

BACK to basics? Maybe. Back to my place? Quite possibly. But back to the local Conservative club? Definitely not — or not, at least, if you're a Conservative living anywhere near the Prime Minister's home town of Huntingdon.

Following indications earlier this month that all was far from well, Huntingdon Conservative Club, where the Majors celebrated the result of the 1992 election, has reentered another step nearer to closure. Following an emergency meeting on Saturday, club chairman Roger Juggins has been given just one week to find £10,000 of additional finance for the club, or cease trading.

The club's problems stem from its dwindling membership. Three years ago it boasted 2,000 members and shared its building with the town's Conservative Association. Now the association has moved out and, after a disastrous attempt last October to increase income by doubling subscriptions, membership has slumped to about 240.

Sir Anthony Grant, Tory

MP for nearby Cambridgeshire South West and whose local St Neots club is thriving, believes "Conservative clubs are the grassroots of the Conservative Party". Yesterday his advice to Huntingdon was that while money was obviously important, so was "a sense of go". "You've always got to keep moving — an extension here, a refurbishment there, a new billiard table, a golf tournament."

There is one last-minute glimmer of hope. On Friday Norma Major will be hosting a large Mencap event at the club. "One big function like that a week would be sufficient," says Juggins. "Otherwise things look bleak."

No oil painting

EVEN before the Princess of Wales apparently decided that an Australian dental surgeon was what she'd wanted to be all along, her husband's trip Down Under was never going to be incident-free. If the pouting beach beauties don't get him, those spouting republi-

canism almost certainly will. Thankfully, however, the Queen looks assured of a more peaceful welcome when she visits Bermuda, now basking under the benign governorship of Lord Waddington, former Home Secretary. Every effort is being made to ensure her March visit passes off without incident. Including, it seems, the diplomatic disappearance of a controversial portrait of Her Majesty in the City Hall at Hamilton.

Commissioned by a local royalist in the mid-1980s, the painting, by a Canadian artist, is said by some to show a "tight-lipped and curiously sceptical" monarch. Others



describe the representation baldly as "cadaverous, loathsome and awful". Local officials will not be drawn in public as to how the royal blushes are to be spared. But as one confides: "Something is in the works to make it temporarily disappear."

Feeling the heat

WHICHEVER way he votes, Paul Marland, Tory MP for Gloucestershire West, will have some explaining to do after Labour's key amendment to wreck government plans to levy VAT on fuel bills. Vote against the Government on Tuesday, and he will answer to party whips. Vote with the Government and he will answer to at least one very angry constituent. For it was in December — two weeks after Labour famously failed



to table a similar amendment at the end of the debate on the Budget — that Marland wrote to a constituent, expressing his anger at being denied the expected chance to vote against the Chancellor's plan. Blaming Labour incompetence, he added: "I am sure you can imagine my frustration, and that of my colleagues, at the situation in which we find ourselves." Wonder what situation he'll find himself on Wednesday morning.

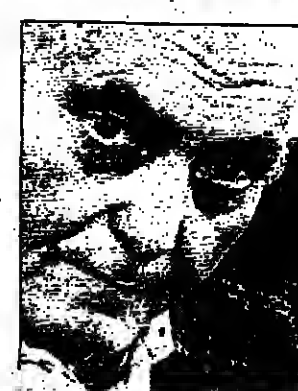
●The organisers of the T.S. Eliot Poetry Prize were fortunate indeed to have the prize presented by Eliot's widow, Valerie. She is a busy woman these days, much occupied with compiling a second volume of letters, covering 1922-28, an eventful period in her husband's life. "It's a full-time job," she says. "And I've learnt

rather a lot about my husband I didn't know."

Batting for Bonn

A SMALL band of Germans is batting valiantly for cricket because the finest wickets in Germany, situated on British army and air force bases, are under threat as British troops withdraw from the republic.

The German Cricket Federation is trying to persuade local authorities that the 20 pitches should be saved. "We don't want them to be turned into supermarkets and so on," explains Rolf Schwiete, the federation's chairman. Schwiete hopes for help from the MCC, which last year sent John Holder, a Test panel umpire, to coach students in Germany — no easy task since silly mid-on translates as *der Dummkopf in der Mitte*. Field Marshall Lord Bramall, a former MCC president and a sharpish batsman in his day, is guardedly sympathetic: "I once played in Berlin with a chap fielding at short leg who looked just like Rudolf Hess," he says. "It wasn't him of course. But really we can't keep the troops out there just because of cricket."



Sir Georg Solti and his actress daughter Claudia



Theatre as an extended family

OXFORD is in for a rare display of dynastic dynamism next week, if a sneak preview of a new play, curiously titled *Accidental Colour*, is anything to go by. The play is written and directed by Rowan Joffe, a second-year English undergraduate whose theatrical pedigree is impeccable: his father is Roland Joffe, director of such films as *The Killing Fields* and *The Mission*; his mother is Jane Lapotnik, the actress.

Nor is his cast short of artistic breeding. The leading lady in a play about an "intense and incestuous relationship between a painter and his sister" is Claudia Solti, an undergraduate at Brasenose and daughter of the conductor Sir Georg Solti. Solti fills expects her father to attend the first night at the Old Fire Station, pointing out hastily that there will be no impropriety on stage: "There is an underlying sexuality but nothing actually happens. At the climax, the brother does try to kiss his sister but he's gone mad by then anyway."



CLARKE'S CASE

The Chancellor need not be so evasive on tax

Appearing on the BBC's Breakfast with Frost programme yesterday, Kenneth Clarke again dismissed as "piffle" the charge that the average British family would be paying a higher proportion of its income in taxes under the Clarke fiscal regime than it did under that of Denis Healey. Mr Clarke first described this uncomfortable, but undeniable, arithmetical fact as "piffle" ten days ago, after it was disclosed in *The Times*. The result of his flippant was not, as he evidently hoped, to discredit the claim that the Tories had lost their reputation as the party of lower taxes. It was, on the contrary, to undermine the government's economic credibility still further — now that the Treasury has officially confirmed the findings of the *Times* survey.

Ministers' refusal ever to admit they have made mistakes or explain the reasons for their errors only adds fuel to the fire of national cynicism they so decry. Mr Clarke convinces no-one when says, as he did yesterday, that higher taxes were "necessary to get us more jobs and more growth". But what could Mr Clarke have said?

For a Conservative government that wished to restore its reputation for plain-dealing and economic competence, a convincing defence against the argument on taxes would not be so hard to find. The first point Mr Clarke should acknowledge is that higher taxes will not "get us more jobs and more growth". In fact, they are virtually guaranteed to reduce both. His second admission should be that Britain's tax burden today has less to do with generous spending on health, education and policing than with the wasteful monetary and exchange-rate policy which made destroyed thousands of businesses and a million jobs.

If only Mr Clarke could make these two concessions to common sense, his way out of the present quandary would be clear. Suppose he had recognised last November that inadequate growth was by far the most important cause of the government's fiscal problems and that higher taxes were bound to depress the rate of recovery. He would

then have cut interest rates sharply in the Budget, as *The Times*, along with many other responsible economic commentators, recommended. A bold two-point cut in interest rates would have put money in the pockets of mortgage borrowers and strengthened corporate balance sheets, largely offsetting the impact of higher taxes on consumer spending and investment. The Treasury's welcome initiative to help small savers by promoting a new fixed-interest national savings bond, could have ensured a favorable political reception for this much-needed rebalancing of monetary and fiscal policy, even among the pensioners who complain bitterly about low interest rates.

When criticised for raising taxes, Mr Clarke could have admitted that taxes were too high, but added that they were the penalty for pursuing the mistaken policy of ERM membership, which Labour had endorsed enthusiastically, but the government had now abandoned. He could then have added that the Budget increase in taxes was the *quid pro quo* for sharp reductions in interest rates — and these would indeed "get us more jobs and more growth". Finally, he could have said that as the economy accelerated, which it would certainly do with a much easier monetary policy, the Tories would attack government spending more aggressively than ever before.

Mr Clarke refuses to make any of these admissions. Yesterday he again denied that ERM membership had aggravated the recession and repeated the Bank of England dogma that monetary policy must be used solely to control inflation, not to promote growth. As a result of these dogmas, most families in Britain will face higher mortgage bills in April, on top of their higher tax demands. The economic recovery, which contrary to the claims of ministerial boosters has shown no sign of accelerating since the first quarter of 1993, will almost certainly slow further in April. And the government will stand accused of economic incompetence and dishonesty on taxes — in the future, as well as in the past.

BRITISH PLATOONS

Nationhood is more than great national institutions

When Michael Portillo spoke earlier this month of the decline in national morale, he launched a much-needed debate on the nature of Britishness. National self-confidence, he said, had suffered at the hands of a cynical liberal elite; strength was slipping from the nation; the great institutions of the realm were at risk. His speech raised fundamental questions about British nationhood, which *The Times* intends to address in a series of articles over the coming days.

The dangers of such a debate are as great as its potential rewards. John Major's back to basics campaign has shown that politicians who seek to raise moral or cultural standards without forethought do so at their peril. The debate on nationhood can easily descend into flag-raising, misleading talk of an imagined Golden Age, and whimsical Blakean calls for a New Jerusalem. The triumphs of the Falklands War prompted an extraordinary upsurge of national pride. But, on the face of it, Britain is unlikely to fight many such campaigns in the future; the role of its independent nuclear deterrent is also likely to change. We will need a new form of nationhood to weather complex shifts in power such as the development of Europe.

What most people mean by Britishness has its roots in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The notion of national Protestant destiny was by that stage well-established; but it was the Napoleonic Wars that defined the modern British sense of justified insularity, military might and imperial stature. The foundations of nationhood were not shared racial origins, therefore, but the distinctiveness and durability of British institutions: monarchy, Church, Parliament, and armed forces.

As a result, the state of the nation is usually equated with the health of these institutions. All have been subjected to profound scrutiny in recent years; all found

wanting in various ways. Sometimes, as Mr Portillo warned, the scrutiny itself has been cynical and damaging. But it should be asked whether the well-being of the great institutions is always the best measure of national self-confidence.

The other strand in Britishness is local, idiosyncratic and less easily defined. The component parts of nationhood are the "little platoons" celebrated by Burke: families, neighbourhoods, schools, churches, professional groups, regiments and other bodies that stand between the individual and the State. Resistance in areas such as Yorkshire and Somerset to the work of the Local Government Commission suggests that regional boundaries are still profoundly important to people's sense of identity. The polity begins at home.

In spite of Lady Thatcher's apparent rejection of "society", the Government has done more than is often appreciated to regenerate these platoons in the last fourteen years. There may be disarray at Westminster and declining faith in central institutions; but ordinary people's participation in, and control over, schools, housing, public services and lawkeeping has never been greater. Regions such as Merseyside have developed new, pluralist forms of local governance quite different to the old town hall model; other areas — including Mr Portillo's own constituency, Enfield, Southgate — have strengthened community ties through a collective interest in conservation and the quality of the environment.

This must be the starting point of the crusade for renewal which Mr Portillo proposes. It is through attention to family, neighbourhood, sound economic sense and local ties that national morale will bloom. This is not a glamorous or immediately achievable task. It will require of politicians the same confidence that they now demand of the citizens they represent.

ALL OUR TODAYS

Brian Redhead was one of news radio's great exponents

The unexpected death of Brian Redhead yesterday ends a memorable chapter in British journalism. Though many disagreed with his convictions and style, none could deny his extraordinary impact upon Britain's broadcasting as presenter of Radio 4's *Today* for 18 years.

Like Brian Johnston, the legendary cricket commentator who died this month, Redhead disproved the claim that television would quickly destroy radio. On the contrary, *Today* became the most important agenda-setter in the nation's news culture. Margaret Thatcher, whose views could scarcely have differed more from Redhead's, was a devoted listener to the show who sometimes called in to correct its presenters or to add her own gloss on the issue under discussion.

To the chagrin of many newspapers, ministers became willing to break their own news embargoes to gain radio coverage in those crucial early hours of the day. Their advisers would negotiate furiously through the night for a prime time slot. Redhead's encounters with politicians were not always peaceful. Yet such spats did nothing to dissuade

ambitious politicians from seeking the imprimatur of an intelligent feature on the programme — especially in the precious minutes either side of the 8 o'clock news. Redhead made *Today* a programme that no member of the political class could afford to miss. It was a reflection of its importance under Redhead that it attracted so much controversy and that so many Britons tuned in for early guidance to the day's major issues.

The beneficiary was not a single programme but the very medium of radio. Forty years after the invention of colour television, middle-class Britons will still turn to radio for intelligent news broadcasting in the same way that they invest more emotion in *The Archers* than in any television soap opera. Because radio is cheap, it continues to innovate and provide inspiration for television, which has recently imported the Radio 4 programmes *The Moral Maze* and *On the Hour* with great success. Redhead was one of the most compelling figures in the glorious firmament of post-war radio. His voice still resounds in the ears of all those who take their politics seriously.

Doubts on Major's evidence to Scott

From Mr Michael Meacher, MP for Oldham West (Labour)

Sir, As someone who has held ministerial office in Whitehall and for five years saw from the inside how the system worked, I find it utterly impossible to believe that John Major, having headed all the relevant departments of state, was never told until November 1992 about the December 1988 change in the government guidelines on arms-related exports to Iraq (report, January 18; letters, January 17 and 21).

As Chief Secretary to the Treasury responsible for export credits from June 1987 to July 1989, it is very difficult to see how, in view of the strict House guidelines of 1984-85, he could have authorised a doubling of export credits to Iraq from £125 million in 1988 to £340 million in 1989 if he had not known that the guidelines had been changed.

As Foreign Secretary from July to October 1989, it seems unbelievable that Mr Major was not briefed on arrival about Middle East policy or that the brief did not mention this important recent change in trade policy towards Iraq.

It seems equally unbelievable that his minister of state, William Waldegrave, with day-to-day responsibility for the Middle East, never once min-

used his boss about the sensitivities of this change of policy or sought his continued approval for it.

As Chancellor from October 1989 to November 1990, it is extremely difficult to believe that Mr Major did not see the letter written to him in June 1990 by Nicholas Ridley, the Secretary of State for Trade, trying to limit an investigation into Matrix Churchill by Customs and Excise, for which Mr Major's department was responsible.

Mr Major admits his private office received the letter, but says they never showed it to him. It is frankly inconceivable that a letter of this kind, from another Cabinet member, detailing the background to a matter of potentially enormous embarrassment to the Government, was kept from him as head of the department.

What makes this whole saga so unbelievable is that Mr Major, unlike some ministers, is known as a very conscientious absorber of briefing. It is simply impossible to square his voracious appetite for detail with the facade he presented to Scott of a kind of British Reagan.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL MEACHER
(Shadow Minister for Citizens' Rights),
House of Commons,
January 21.

Enquiry guidelines

From Mr P. H. Crawford

Sir, Lord Justice Scott is not the only chairman of a public enquiry to face criticism for departing from the guidelines formulated by Lord Salmon for the conduct of such tribunals (report and leading article, January 13).

For the past 18 months Sir John May's enquiry into the Guildford and Woolwich bombings in 1974 (in respect of which I represent the interests of the surviving members of prosecution counsel) has been considering the circumstances surrounding the trial and convictions of the Guildford Four.

The Salmon guidelines include cardinal principles to the effect that a person involved in such an enquiry should have the opportunity to state his case in public and both to cross-examine any witness whose evidence may affect him and to call evidence on his own account. These principles have not been followed during the present phase of the May enquiry.

The reasons (in particular the delay and added costs of giving all represented parties the opportunity to cross-examine witnesses) can be readily understood.

However, an individual facing criticism in the course of a public enquiry which may vitally affect his interests should be entitled to expect the protection of elementary and fundamental rights to test evidence by cross-examination, and to require other

witnesses who may be able to rebut such criticism to be called.

Merely giving an opportunity to comment upon provisional findings in advance of a final report (a procedure adopted by both Lord Justice Scott and Sir John May) is no substitute for following guidelines which were formulated to avoid the difficulties and injustices individuals might otherwise face. There is no right of appeal against any adverse finding.

Quite apart from considerations of fairness, observance of the guidelines is more likely to establish the truth and thus form a more reliable basis for any ultimate findings.

The fact that misgivings concerning the conduct of Sir John's enquiry are not more widely known may be due to the hearings during this stage of his enquiry being held in private. Such misgivings were made known to the enquiry long before Lord Howe's similar complaints in respect of the Scott enquiry.

With the long delay in the trial of police officers connected with the original investigation the decision to hold hearings in private is understandable. It does however mean that those called to give evidence are deprived of the opportunity both to state their case and if possible to vindicate themselves in public.

Yours faithfully,
P. H. CRAWFORD,
Sitt & Co (solicitors),
4 Paper Buildings, Temple, ECA.

Right to silence

From Mr Richard Brock

Sir, Numerous cases come before the Crown Court where a defendant is charged with attacking another person on impulse and without the use of a weapon.

In most such cases, the person arrested either declines to answer questions when interviewed by the police (letters, January 11, 14, 20), or claims that he was acting in self-defence. At trial the complainant and other witnesses (if any) are cross-examined on the basis of self-defence and the defendant does not give evidence.

The judge is then bound to direct the jury that they may not convict unless satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant was not acting in self-defence. The jury will almost

inevitably and rightly acquit, since they have not heard from the defendant and cannot exclude the possibility, no matter how remote, that he was acting, or thought that he was acting, in his own defence.

The difficulties confronting the prosecution are further compounded in many such cases when attacks are made on the characters of prosecution witnesses and the jury hear nothing of the defendant's own convictions, not infrequently for violence.

Some, at least, of the changes contained in the Bill now before Parliament would go far towards rectifying such travesties of justice which are daily enacted in the Crown Courts of this country.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD BROCK,
10 King's Bench Walk, Temple, ECA,
January 20.

Duchess's conversion

From Brigadier Nicholas Cocking (ret)

Sir, I have been following with interest the correspondence (January 15, 19) to which the conversion of the Duchess of Kent to the Roman Catholic faith has given rise. Mr W. J. Briggs (letter, January 19), writing from Cobblers Cottage, is correct in referring to the Roman Catholic Church as being designated non-conformist within the United Kingdom.

However, it will seem odd to many of us that the largest Christian, churchgoing community in Britain should be so designated; when placed in the context of the Universal Church it is patently absurd.

Yours sincerely,
NICHOLAS COCKING,
309 Hawkins House,
Dolphin Square, SW1,
January 19.

A mild rocket

From Mr Richard Quincey

Sir, I enjoyed Lynne Truss's review of *Middlemarch* (January 13); but was sorry that she misnamed the Stephensons' locomotive. It was, in fact, a replica of their Locomotion, the engine used to open the Stockton to Darlington railway in 1825.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD QUINCEY,
10 Clarendon Gardens,
Tunbridge Wells, Kent,
January 14.

Missing out on VAT

From Ms Margaret Austin

Sir, For all the Chancellor's fine words in his Budget speech last November about helping the elderly, we now see the electricity companies encouraging consumers to avoid the imposition of value-added tax by paying sums in advance of billing (Weekend Money, January 15). This means that those with substantial capital or income will benefit the Government will lose revenue and, above all, the ordinary person existing on the basic pension and unable to do this will suffer further hardship.

Yours truly,
MARGARET AUSTIN,
57a Elers Road, W13.

Joyce remembered

From Mr David Worthington

Sir, One reason, perhaps, why James Joyce has not been honoured with a memorial in London before now (report, January 15) could be that, by and large, he seems not to have liked living here. Campden Grove in Kensington, W8, was for him inhabited by mummies and called Campden Grave. Dates and anniversaries were important to Joyce. Whatever else he might have thought about a plaque at 280 Campden Grove, he would have approved of the unveiling on his birthday, February 2.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID WORTHINGTON,
Sancroft, Worthing Road,
Leigh Woods, Bristol, Avon.

Efforts to cleanse the air we breathe

From the Chief Executive of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders Ltd

Sir, Your series of articles on air pollution (January 10-12; letters, January 19) may have given the impression that the motor industry has done little or nothing to alleviate a problem which it acknowledges may, in part, be attributed to its products.

Pollution caused by cars is, in fact, diminishing rapidly, with more than 2.6 million petrol-engined cars now equipped with catalytic converters which have been obligatory on new registrations since January 1993 (not 1994 as stated in your leader on January 15).

The improvement in air quality should now accelerate rapidly and would be even better, as you state, if old and ill-maintained vehicles were tolerated less. The reduction in lead in the air has been quite dramatic as motorists have switched to using unleaded petrol, which has to be used with catalysis.

In 1996-97 even stricter regulations will be applied to new vehicles so the "cleaning progress" will be even greater, but it will be a few years into the next century before virtually every car on the road is catalysed.

The growing popularity of diesel cars has also been criticised as a prime source of pollution. This sector is the subject of enormous research and the latest diesels already use highly sophisticated technology, including catalysts, to contain emissions. All new trucks and buses must meet stringent EC specifications, and this society has made the strongest representations to government to speed up the introduction of cleaner buses by offering scrappage grants to get the elderly "smokers" off the road.

We do not agree that pollution levels will necessarily rise in the next century as traffic levels increase: technology does not stand still — as we have already seen from the huge improvements achieved in vehicle safety over the past decade. Alternative fuels may help, but more sophisticated engineering solutions will be developed as vehicles become lighter in weight and more fuel-efficient.

The industry recognises its responsibilities in these matters and is already rising to the challenge.

Yours faithfully,
R. E. THOMPSON,
Chief Executive,
The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders Ltd,
Forbes House, Halkin Street, SW1,
January 21.

From Dr J. J. Cogswell

Sir, Much more research into the effects on children of airborne allergens and air pollutants is required. Although several chemical pollutants have been associated with asthma in local studies, there is no difference in

asthma prevalence in this country between urban and rural areas.

In the USA trends in air pollution with sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone and suspended particles had all fallen between 1981 and 1990, at a time when asthma was increasing. Thus, evidence on the role of outdoor air pollution as the main factor contributing to present increases in the number of asthmatic children remains controversial.

Since children spend 90 per cent of their lives indoors, the indoor environment may be a more important factor in causing the epidemiological trends now being seen than the air out of doors. Building practices which conserve energy and create the warm damp atmosphere ideal for house mite replication may be significant. So, too, may maternal smoking before birth and the increasing rate of premature births.

Thus, the reasons for more children suffering from asthma remain unclear. Caution needs to be exercised before using improved child health as the main reason to justify the clean air campaign.

Yours faithfully,
J. J. COGSWELL,
(Consultant paediatrician),
Poole Hospital,
Langfleet Road, Poole, Dorset,
January 18.

From Councillor J. P. Mellor

Sir, Your report of January 11 named certain local authorities, including Wolverhampton, which "fail to monitor the air their citizens breathe and have no plans to do so". The implication is that the council is not concerned about the wellbeing of those who live and work in the borough.

This is patently not the case. Wolverhampton has been undertaking atmospheric monitoring since the early 1960s. We are currently monitoring air quality at over 40 sites for a range of pollutants which include oxides of nitrogen, particulates, sulphur dioxide and certain heavy metals.

Wolverhampton is one of the towns earmarked by the Department of Environment in 1992 as a location for an "enhanced urban network" monitoring station. However the DOE is reviewing its list of towns and it is possible that Wolverhampton may not now be included.

I can assure you that the council will maintain its own monitoring commitment and given the resources would seek to upgrade its existing network.

Yours faithfully,
J. P. MELLOR
(Chairman, Environmental Health and Consumer Services Committee),
Wolverhampton Metropolitan Borough Council,
Civic Centre, St Peter's Square,
Wolverhampton, West Midlands.

CrossRail in dispute

From Councillor Gwyneth Deakins

Sir, To suggest that CrossRail will "relieve many congestion problems" as do the construction industry's "great and good" in their letter of January 17, is somewhat misleading. Given the reduction of employment in central London since 1989, the estimates of commuter demand on which the case for CrossRail is based no longer reflect the needs of the Underground network in central London.

Where congestion does exist, it has more to do with broken-down trains, poor infrastructure and signalling problems than lack of capacity. This could be better addressed by modest expenditure to upgrade the existing network rather than massive expenditure to build CrossRail.

If any transport project is "vital to the future of London as a world-class capital city", it is surely the Channel tunnel link.

The construction and other interests which declare their loyalty to CrossRail may stand to win one or two lucrative contracts in improving times; but the object of their enthusiasm would, in reality, impose a huge public expenditure burden on the capital for very little benefit.

Yours faithfully,
GWYNETH DEAKINS
(Chair, Policy Strategy Committee),
London Borough of Tower Hamlets,
Mulberry Place,
5 Clove Crescent, E14,
January 17.

Appeal of the pipes

From Mr Brian Bagnall

Sir, Colonel Donald Wilson (letter, January 17) acknowledges that the appeal of the bagpipes may not be universal. Indeed, The Germans' retreat on the field of battle from Highland troops led by bagpipers was probably due largely to the Teutonic musical ear being quite unable to stand the atrocious noise. Concertos have been scored for almost every musical instrument, but not, to my knowledge, the bagpipes.

Sir Thomas Beecham referred once to the bagpipes and dismissed them for ever from his musical repertoire. He said the bagpipe is a supposed musical instrument, which after several years of practice sounds worse than at the beginning.

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN BAGNALL,
Shalford Mill, Shalford, Surrey,
January 17.

Safety first

From Mr W. Hocknell

Sir, I recently purchased an electric appliance for use in my home. The first page of the instruction booklet is filled with 18 "Important Safeguards". The remaining pages contain four paragraphs printed in heavy type and headed "Warning" and five paragraphs headed "Important". In addition two safety notices are attached to the appliance itself.

Should I feel apprehensive about using my new, if perfectly conventional, electric kettle?

Yours faithfully,
W. HOCKNELL,
14b Pelham Road,
Grimsby, South Humberside,
January 22.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 071-782 5046.

NEWS

Tories plead to Clarke on tax

■ Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, faced anxious demands from Conservative MPs for tough new public spending cuts to salvage the reputation of the Tories as the party of low taxation.

Treasury admissions that the tax burden of the average family is about to become greater than it was under Labour in 1979 provoked a wave of concern among Conservative MPs and party activists, with widespread fears about their impact on the local and European elections later this year. Page 1, 2, 17

Bosnian Muslims call for UN air raids

■ Bosnian Muslims appealed to Nato to launch air strikes on Serb gun positions above Sarajevo, as an outgoing United Nations commander bitterly attacked his UN political masters for creating "a crisis of confidence and purpose". Pages 1, 13

Lack of judgment

An unprecedented shortage of High Court judges has been compounded by the failure of Lloyd's names to settle their disputes out of court. There will shortly be just one judge available to handle all disputes in the High Court Queen's Bench division. Page 1

Redhead dies

Brian Redhead, the veteran presenter of BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme, died in hospital after treatment for cancer of the stomach. He was 64. There were warm tributes from leaders of all political parties, despite the abusive treatment he gave many politicians during 18 years of early-morning interviews. Pages 1, 3, 19

Instant clamping

Motorists who park on yellow lines persistently and fail to pay outstanding penalty tickets will find their vehicles recognised by a hand-held computer and immediately clamped under a new scheme being tested by traffic wardens. Page 1

Jobless threat

The jobless total could rise by a quarter of a million because of plans to replace sickness and invalidity benefit, according to statistics with ministers. Page 2

Dialysis block

Kidney dialysis machines in London are still being allowed to stand idle while patients elsewhere are left to die. Page 5

Mistress or job: the Austrian choice

President Klesstil of Austria, under pressure to choose between his mistress and his job, promised to sort out his personal problems and end a growing scandal without delay. Herr Klesstil's wife, Edith, left him this month because of his relationship with Margot Loeffler, a Foreign Ministry aide whose duties brought her close to the President. Page 15

Mother's challenge

A woman whose daughter, 10, was taken away from her for a year because of a mistaken diagnosis of sex abuse is to challenge a judge's finding that she cannot sue for damages. Page 7

Riding battle

Leaked plans to restore the Ridings to Yorkshire have been met with disapproval from traditionalists who claim they are being short-changed. Page 8

Economy drive

Motorists would be paying at least £625 a year if the road tax were made to cover the full social cost of the roads they use and the pollution they cause. Page 10

Malaysian heat on

The government was facing growing embarrassment over persistent suggestions that companies involved in a controversial aid project benefited from a £1 billion arms agreement with Malaysia. Page 11

Mud peril

Homeless victims of last Monday's earthquake in Los Angeles were coaxed out of makeshift encampments and into tent cities as forecasts of heavy rain raised the threat of mudslides. Page 12

Theatre tribute

The theatres of Paris dimmed their lights in tribute at the death of Jean-Louis Barrault, the actor-director. Page 13



Hein Arne Mathisen, of Norway, flying high above the northern Japanese city of Sapporo in the large hill World Cup ski jumping yesterday

SPORT

Pitching in: Gary Armstrong, the Scotland scrum half, will win his 29th rugby union cap against England at Murrayfield next Saturday after proving his fitness for Jed-Forest at the weekend. Page 21

Off the lead: Howard Clark, the British Ryder Cup player, finished second for the second week running, this time in the Moroccan Open. Page 22

Bobbing along: Mark Tait gave Britain a boost before the Winter Olympics by winning the silver medal in the four-man bobsleigh at the European championships in La Plagne, France. Page 23

Board shake-up: When Lomro issues its latest figures tomorrow, the City expects four directors, including the chairman, to announce their retirement. Page 40

Paper chase: Andreas Whitlam Smith, founder of *The Independent*, is expected today to put forward the Mirror Group as financial saviour of the troubled broadsheet. Page 40

Sold short: Big retailers' dreams of economic recovery faded last week with gloomy news from two of the largest. Graham Seagrave argues that the days of heady growth are still a long way off. Page 38

Portillo's patch: Are Michael Portillo's constituents rallying to his call? Matthew d'Ancona ventures beyond the North Circular in search of Southgate Man. Page 14

Glamour glitz: After the years of bare-faced beauty, the couture houses are splashing out in bold, bright colours and brilliant metallics. Page 15

Reasons to believe: With moral issues firmly back on the national political agenda, Peter Jackson reports a new impetus in religious education. Page 29

John the divine: John Tavener was once seen as a superstitious freak. But at 50, he is one of a number of composers who have revived the religious spirit of music, becoming a cult figure. Page 31

Foiled heroics: From the *Thunderbirds* FAB team comes a spoof of *The Three Musketeers*. Unfortunately, it is a draggy effort and very ordinary romp. Page 31

Star return: Opera North's revival of Chabrier's comedy, *L'Étoile*, is all a revival should be: even better than the original 1991 production that was so brilliantly staged by Phyllida Lloyd. Page 52

THE TIMES TOMORROW

LA lawyers get moving

■ Los Angeles lawyers with their downtown offices got off lightly when the earthquake struck. Now they are busy dealing with the legal aftermath as the city tries to return to normal.

Reining in child kidnap

■ Are the courts powerful enough to deal with a parent who decides that he is going to take the law into his own hands?

Focus on a century of images

■ The Hulton Deutsch Collection: how to select an exhibition from 15 million photographs of some of the most important events of the 20th century

The boot goes in

Graham Taylor is seen during 18 rocky months as England football manager in *Cutting Edge* (Channel 4, 9pm). Page 39

Clarke's case

For a Conservative government that wished to restore its reputation for plain-dealing and economic competence, a convincing defence against the argument on taxes would not be so hard to find. Page 17

British platoons

When Michael Portillo spoke this month of the decline in national morale, he launched a much-needed debate on the nature of Britishness. His speech raised questions which *The Times* will address in a series of articles, starting today. Page 17

All our todays

The unexpected death of Brian Redhead yesterday ends a memorable chapter in British journalism. Page 17

WILLIAM REES-MOGG

Conservative ministers now have the newspapers; some of them are quite hysterical... at receptions... when they catch my eye, they search hastily for a tray of canapés in the farthest corner of the room. Page 16

PETER RIDDELL

If... the Tories are at last running out of luck and time, whether under John Major or someone else, then the character of the alternative is crucial. Page 16

BRIAN REDHEAD

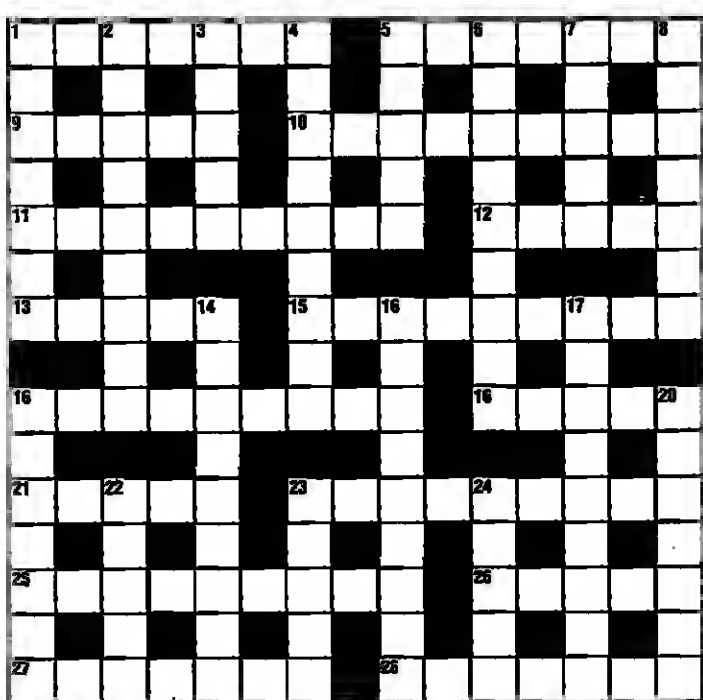
Brian Redhead, scourge of the pompous politician: Telly Savalas, American actor; Bill Podmore, the former producer of *Coronation Street*. Page 20

Attempts to improve the air we breathe

Page 17

Calamities of this sort [the California earthquake] tend to still temporarily the voices that normally cry out against acts of generosity sponsored by government. There but for the grace of God go I turns out to be a reasonable guide to social policy. — *The Washington Post*

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 19,447



- ACROSS**
- 1 Meet a sailor going around the shore (7).
 - 5 Intimidates with discourtesy — such a bloomer (7).
 - 9 Decline to cover the London area (5).
 - 10 Properly treated, are able to develop (9).
 - 11 3 teams were real fighters (9).
 - 12 Newspaper leader admitting people bring about reform (5).
 - 13 Old king behind a sucker (5).
 - 15 The Cockney is only a quarter as sensitive (4-5).
 - 18 Rule a girl out of order, though it's irregular (9).
 - 19 Big Sarah backs the noose! (5).
 - 21 Little beast is cut short by the minister (5).
 - 23 Carried away by a stirring tale? (9).
- DOWN**
- 1 Joining a novice in a prostrate position (7).
 - 2 *23 dn* is in favour of cutting the discount (9).
 - 3 Newsmen in force (5).
 - 4 A plant to cover the ground quickly to good effect (9).
 - 5 A level hundred pounds will go on dope (5).
 - 6 Sort of bread unsuitable for sandwiches? (9).
 - 7 Like going into sheltered accommodation that's for rent (5).
 - 8 He's appealing — quiet and superior (7).
 - 14 When newly-fixed, tries fire alarms (9).
 - 16 A way to assist the head in all seriousness (9).
 - 17 Wrongly appraised? Get away! (9).
 - 18 Fish to catch from deck (7).
 - 20 Told of Parisian appearing in gold and scarlet (7).
 - 22 Increase about right for a cleaner (5).
 - 23 A rascal to be taken in hand (5).
 - 24 Move in a dream, blessedly unaware (5).



The solution of Saturday's Prize Puzzle No 19,446 will appear next Saturday. The five winners will receive a bottle of Knockando, a superb Speyside Single Malt Scotch whisky and a stationary rack.

Times Two Crossword, page 40

TIMES WEATHERCALL

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0891 600 followed by the appropriate code.

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun rises: 7:51 am Sun sets: 4:36 pm
Moon rises: 1:36 pm Moon sets: 5:13 pm

Full Moon January 27

London 4:36 pm to 7:51 am
Bright 4:42 pm to 8:22 am
Manchester 4:36 pm to 8:07 am
Percival 5:02 pm to 9:07 am

METEOROLOGICAL

General: Wales and southern England will have rain or drizzle at times. Some sleet or snow over the Welsh hills. Most of northern England dry with bright spells but rain will reach western areas by midnight. Northern Ireland will have rain or drizzle. Scotland will be dry and bright. Cloud and rain in western areas in the evening. Windy in the north. Mild in the south.

LONDON, SE, CENT S ENG, E ANGLIA

Channel Sea: Cloudy with rain or drizzle at times. Drier in the afternoon. Wind W, mainly light. Max 5C (45F).
SE, CENT S ENG, E ANGLIA: Cloudy with rain or drizzle. Wind W, mainly light. Max 5C (45F).
Midlands, SW Eng, S Wales, Isle of Man, Northern Ireland: Cloudy with rain or drizzle. Wind mainly W, moderate to fresh. Max 11C (52F).

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RE impetus may change the moral climate

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John Tavener is the musical rebel with a medieval cause

LONRHO SHUFFLE 40

Chairman and three directors to bow out

THE TIMES

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MONDAY JANUARY 24 1994

Lewis late withdrawal from opening game of tour

England openers make hay in sun

FROM ANDREW LONGMORE IN ANTIGUA

A HEALTHY start by England on the field yesterday was not duplicated off it as Chris Lewis was forced to pull out of the side for the opening match of their tour at the last minute, suffering from sunstroke.

Shortly after the tea interval on the first day of the four-day match against an Antigua XI, England had reached 265 for one. Michael Atherton having won the toss, Alec Stewart completed a familiar century before retiring hurt with a tight hamstring — more as a precaution than through real injury — and Atherton later followed suit.

in Guyana, Lewis was confident that he would not be affected by the heat, but by shaving his head on the second day of the tour, a statement perhaps of his new aggressive intent, and not wearing a hat during some practice sessions last week, Lewis has invited trouble, which seems to follow him naturally anyway. He was seen by a doctor at the local hospital in St John's yesterday and advised to stay out of the sun for the next few days.

Twice in the Oval in 1990 and Headingley in 1991, Lewis has had to pull out of tests on the morning of the match. Neither situation was properly explained, though Lewis, 25, has suffered from circulatory problems throughout his career. Lewis's place yesterday was taken by Alan Jones, who has a lengthy medical record of his own.

Whatever Lewis's aversion to the sun, England opened with a quiet, steady rain, but it was not enough to make him pull out. Lewis, who once played for Glamorgan and reached the fringes of the West Indies side, said Dave Stewart, have expected first-class cricket. The rest are players at this level and Stewart and Atherton enjoyed the benefit of introductions to Caribbean conditions.

The pair will face many more, facing starts over the next few months but, as an exercise in enhancing confidence after a week of net practice and months of talk, this was just about ideal. Stewart, in particular, was in regal form, hammering his second ball of the morning to the cover-point boundary after a brief downpour had caused play to be delayed for 20 minutes. Four balls later, he fast-batted another boundary through mid on, drawing a babble of appreciation from a small band of locals.

The second over, bowled by Randy Challenger, a gangling youth with a touch of Joel

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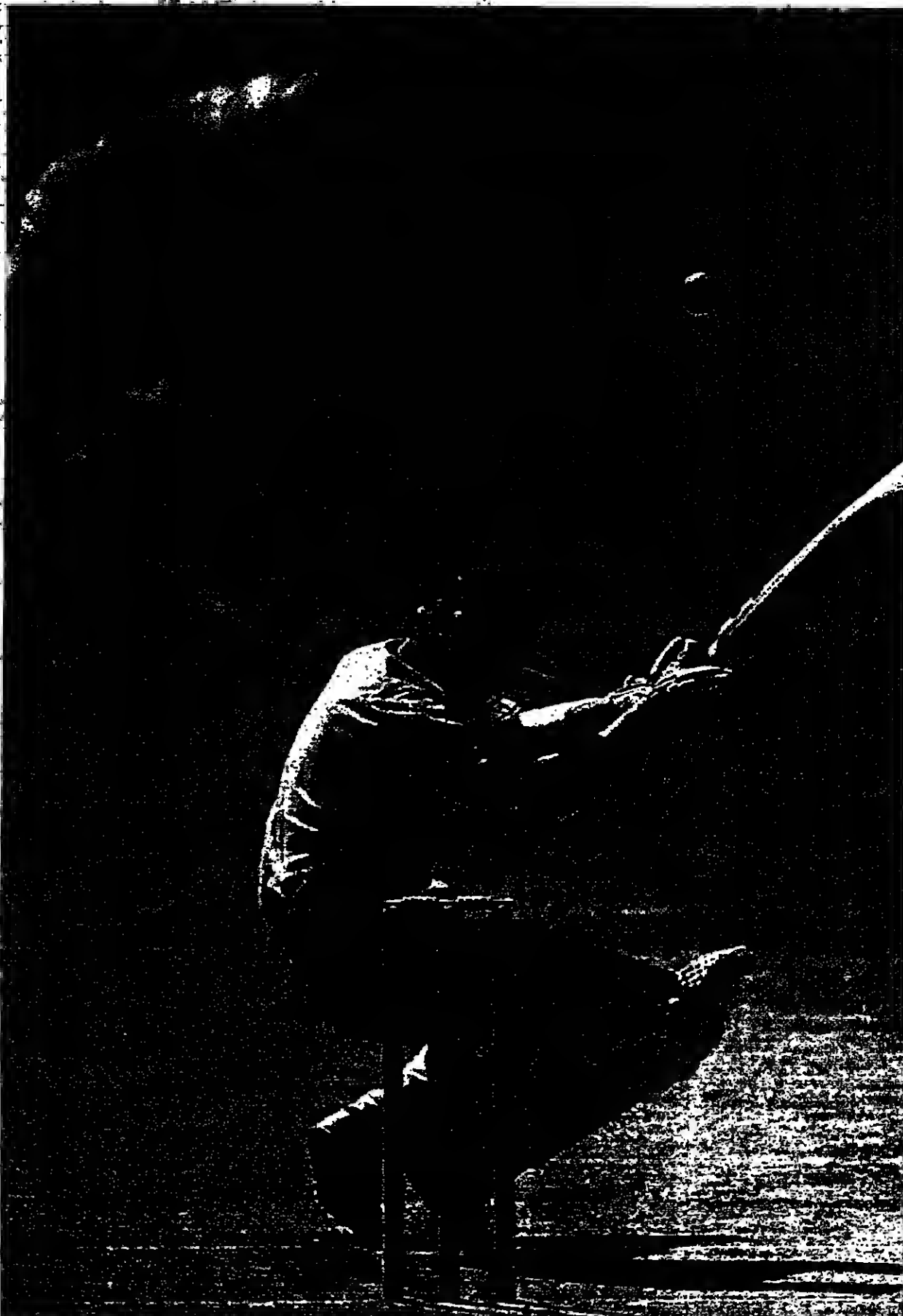
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The second over, bowled by Randy Challenger, a gangling youth with a touch of Joel



Atherton takes evasive action in response to a Joseph bouncer. Photograph: Graham Morris

Garner in his scorch but some of the accuracy, produced three no-balls, two four and two short, run-ups. After four overs, England had scored 35, after nine they were 50 and when the drinks were wheeled on at the end of the first hour, the opening stand had reached 73 at more than

seven an over and Atherton, who had been the more tentative of the two early on, had begun to flourish as well, working his favourite areas through mid-wicket and backward of cover point.

Not until Anthony made a belated appearance in the attack after lunch, with Eng-

land 111-0 and disappearing over the horizon, did anything disturb their progress. Atherton had to sway away from the first really nasty ball of the day, from Anthony, before following Stewart to his 50 with a sliced drive over gully.

Stewart's century came soon after, with his sixteenth four,

but, having received treatment for his hamstring from the England physio, Dave Roberts, he wisely decided he had done enough for one day and headed for the pavilion.

Diary, page 16
England A on brink, page 23

Scotland coax Armstrong to return for five nations' duty

BY DAVID HANDS AND ALAN LORIMER

GARY Armstrong's return to international rugby has been confirmed. The scrum half proved his fitness during Jed-Forrests 33-10 McEwan's League victory over Gala on Saturday. Duncan Paterson, the Scottish team manager, said it would be a "tremendous boost" to have Armstrong winning his 29th cap against England at Murrayfield on February 5.

Having revoked last summer's decision to play only club rugby, Armstrong admitted, after only his third match since playing for the Barbarians against New Zealand seven weeks ago, that he "felt tired in the legs, probably because I have been training every day and put in a lot of running." He has been coached by Chico Woods, a professional sprint trainer.

Bryan Redpath, of Melrose, remains as the replacement scrum half because Andy Nicol, who bruised ribs playing against Wales, cannot be sure of appearing for Dundee High School Former Pupils next weekend. Kenny Milne, the experienced hooker, must play for Heriot's Former Pupils next Saturday too after missing the club's match at the weekend.

Should Milne fail to fulfil these requirements Scotland will call up Kevin McKenzie, the reserve hooker. This weekend, Armstrong admitted that he had "missed being part of the international side" but Scotland has missed him too. While he has agreed to come back for the Calcutta Cup match he has ruled out the possibility of going on any tours with Scotland.

Meanwhile, there are no worries over Gregor Townsend, who retired from the Jed-Forrest-Gala match on Saturday with an injury that has been diagnosed as bruising to the hip.

Ireland have made five changes, three positional, in

their team to play Wales in Dublin on February 5. Mark McCall, the Bangor centre, will make his five nations' championship debut, his Ulster colleague, Denis McBride, returns at flanker and Brian Robinson, Paddy Johns and Mick Galwey perform an intricate little dance in the back five of the scrum after the 35-15 defeat by France.

McCall, 26, was capped twice on the Irish tour of New Zealand in 1992 and replaces Vincent Cunningham, whose season ended on Saturday when he damaged knee ligaments playing for St Mary's College. McBride, who proved his recovery from a knee injury in Malone's narrow win over Galwegians, claims his place once more from Ken O'Connell and with it his fourteenth cap.

Galwey will be pleased to move from flanker to lock instead of Johns, who moves back to No 8, the position in which he was picked for the 1992 tour, though his ten caps have come at lock. Robinson, formerly the No 8, moves to the blind-side flank where he played on tour in New Zealand, though not in the two internationals.

IRELAND: C P O'Shea (Lansdowne); R M Wallace (Garryowen); M G McCall (Bangor); P A Dwyer (Garryowen); S P Gallagher (London Irish); E P Ewoud (Lansdowne); M T Bradley (Cork Constitution); N J Poplewell (Glenageary); T J Kingston (Cork); P M O'Shea (Rugby League); B P Redmond (Glenageary); M J Galwey (Shannon); N P J France (Old Belvedere); W D McBride (Melrose); P S Johns (Dundee); replacements: A N O'Brien, A N McGowan (Blackrock College); R Saunders (London Irish); K O'Connell (Glenageary); G F Healy (London Irish); K G M Wood (Glenageary).

IRELAND A (v Wales A, February 4): A N O'Brien, T Howe (Dungannon); B Walsh (Cork Constitution); M Field (Melrose); N Woods (Blackrock College); P Burke (London Irish); N Hogan (Glenageary College); J McKeown (Cork Constitution); J McDonald (Melrose, captain); P McCarthy (Cork Constitution); E Healy (Shannon); J Sheehy (Blackrock College); D Twiss (Glenageary); K McKee (Trillick); R O'Brien; D Humphreys (GLEB); A Rolland (Blackrock College); K Potts (St Mary's College); P Miller (Glenageary); W Mulcahy (Shannon).

Gloucester win, page 24

Shearer rises to the challenge for Blackburn

Blackburn Rovers 2
Leeds United 1

BY PETER BALL

ALAN Shearer is unstoppable. Yesterday his second goal of the game, scored well into injury time, gave Blackburn a deserved victory to keep them leading the pack chasing Manchester United in the FA Carling Premiership. Black-

TERRY Venables may be told tomorrow whether the Football Association will support him as England manager. Graham Kelly, the FA chief executive, yesterday said that if Venables were appointed, his contract would include "every possible safeguard" against allegations about his business conduct.

burn have cut the gap to 13 points. It remains daunting, but they have two games to hand and with Shearer in this irrepressible form, who dares write them off?

He is the outstanding forward in English football, his contribution to the team on a par with his scoring ability. Yesterday the winning goal, his 26th in 29 games and

seventh in the last six matches, could not have been better timed. Gary Speed's splendid strike in the 77th minute had appeared to have earned Leeds a draw, but then came Shearer. It was only a second deficit in 21 matches for the Yorkshire side.

Leeds were fortunate to be in contention when Speed's goal arrived. The failure of Vic Callow, the referee, to send off Paddy Lough for a blatant "professional" foul on Callaghan, compounded by a subsequent refusal of a penalty when Speed sent Callaghan flying, gave Leeds a lifeline they and their supporters did not merit.

The game had a sour beginning as the Leeds followers again proved themselves to contain the most yobbish element in the country. Despite the pleas of their own players, the mass of supporters in the new stand behind the goal at the Darwen End kept up a full-throated chorus of "There's only one Don Revie" throughout the minute's silence for Sir Matt Busby. This time the excuse that such behaviour was the work of a minority could not be sustained.

The behaviour left the Leeds team and its manager, Howard Wilkinson in a state of shock and despair. "There are

lots of words I can use about how much I and the players abhor and were upset by what happened, but looking for reasons is another matter. The players tried to do something about it and were promptly told where to go. These people come from another world and I just don't understand them."

Wilkinson's response was echoed by Kenny Dalglish, who pointed out, quite justifi-

ably, that there had been no such behaviour from the Blackburn supporters. "The unfortunate thing for Leeds is that these people come to matches in which Leeds are playing and so the club gets tainted with it, but it is not right to describe them as football fans," he said.

The Leeds following was booed for the rest of the afternoon. Perhaps the gener-

al disavowal communicated itself to their team. "If I am quite honest with you, in the first 15 minutes a number of our players were numbed by what had happened," Wilkinson added.

For most of the first half, Blackburn attacked constantly. The only surprise was that it took them 11 minutes to find a way through the fragile defence. But when they did the move reflected their excellent

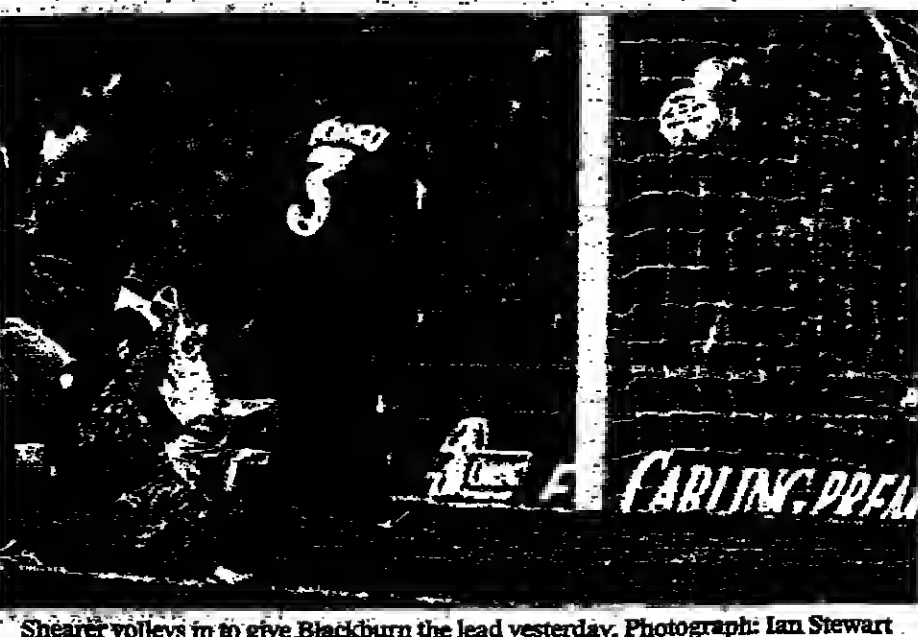
football. It was begun by Le Saux deep in defence, and carried on by Shearer, Batty and Ripley as it moved from left back to the right wing.

Ripley's cross was half cleared, but only as far as Shearer, who switched the point of attack to the left for Wilton to gain a yard on Kelly and curl in a cross. Shearer met it on the volley to leave Beeny helpless.

By the interval Shearer might have had a hat-trick as Blackburn raced through the uncertain Leeds back four, with Batty the driving force from midfield. But Leeds survived and in the second half played a fuller part in the match. Even so, the better chances fell to Blackburn until Speed equalised with a fine shot, and it seemed the result might be an injustice. Instead, Shearer rose to the challenge and to Le Saux's centre, heading it beyond Beeny.

BLACKBURN ROVERS (4-4-2): T. Flower, H. Birt, D. May, K. Morris, G. Le Saux — S. Ripley (sub: N. Morris, 18min), T. Shearer, D. Batty, J. Wilton — A. Shearer, K. Gallacher (sub: I. Hutton, 65).

LEEDS UNITED (4-3-3): M. Beatty — G. Kelly, G. Foran, J. Hogg, A. Donaghy — G. McAllister, G. Speed, G. Strachan — D. White (sub: J. Parnham, 80), B. Deane, J. Forster (sub: N. Whelan, 67). Referee: V. Calver.



Shearer volleys in to give Blackburn the lead yesterday. Photograph: Ian Stewart

Urgent Appeal

He's been blind for 12 years

Your £12 will restore his sight in 10 minutes

In developing countries, there are thousands of elderly people like him. He suffers from cataracts of both eyes, leaving him blind and totally dependent on others. But he doesn't have to be. Just £12 from you, a ten-minute operation and he will be given back his sight. What better gift?

Please return the coupon with your donation now.

Help the Aged, St. James's Walk, London EC1R 0BE

I want to give the gift of sight

☐ £12 pays for a cataract operation

☐ £24 pays for two cataract operations

I enclose my cheque/postal order for £ to: Help the Aged, Ref: 9401MPTX701

FREEPOST, LONDON EC1R 1JY

Or charge my Access/Visa Card Number:

Expiry date Signature

Name

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Help the Aged

Ref: 9401MPTX701

Glorious tradition, page 26
European draw, page 27

Castleford town
regal form to
remove Wigan
dominant au

ION COUR
DESIGN

PASTERREN

WRITER

EDUCATION

Today's lesson in classroom faith

With moral issues
in the news,
Peter Jackson
reports a new
impetus in RE

Religious education in many schools is poor. A shortage of specialist teachers, insufficient teaching time and confusion about the purpose of RE make the subject boring and incoherent for many pupils. The malaise affects maintained and independent schools equally.

But this long neglect suddenly seems likely to end. The current concern with "back to basics" and the debate about morality have brought RE a political attention unknown since the last century. Some politicians believe that better RE might provide a short-cut to higher moral and spiritual values among young people.

Fortunately, this political attention will not find RE teachers unprepared. Tomorrow the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) will publish two model syllabuses which offer unprecedentedly clear guidance to local authorities about how to provide better RE in maintained schools. Independent schools are also considering a new syllabus which has been available for consultation since last September. They have at least a year's start on the maintained sector, as local authorities will not implement the proposed changes until 1995.

However, while model syllabuses should encourage greater coherence, RE still needs guaranteed teaching time. Sir Ron Dearing's review provides it. He proposes that up to the age of 14 RE should have as much teaching time as foundation subjects such as history and geography. From 14 to 16, RE would be guaranteed 5 per cent.



Pupils at the Islamia School in north-west London: the new model RE syllabus places Christianity first, but emphasises the importance of other world religions

This means that the subject will be given two rather than one lesson a week in most schools. The independent schools' syllabus also advises 5 per cent.

The model syllabuses are in part prescriptive, but they still allow local authority conferences (SACREs) and schools considerable discretion. A diagram issued with them will show that, to comply with the law, Christianity must receive the most attention. However, the

study of at least one other world religion is obligatory for all age groups and schools may choose to teach more Christianity or more world religions as they see fit. The independent schools' syllabus gives similar advice, whilst accepting that many schools will, initially, teach much more Christianity than other world religions.

While these changes seem to promise a brighter future for RE, no one should underestimate the

extent of the task. Schools will need to have the will to act on these proposals and the resources, especially trained teachers, to implement them. And the fragile agreement achieved in the SCAA group between a wide variety of Christians and representatives of other religions could easily disintegrate.

The main debate in this group, in which I served, was over the division of teaching time between

Christianity and the other world religions. The 1988 Act requires that RE should be predominantly Christian. Does this mean simply that Christianity should have more time than any other one world faith, or more than all of them put together?

Representatives of the other world religions argued that no one could gain a proper understanding of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, or Sikhism unless they

were given adequate time, and unless there was the possibility of studying a particular faith at more than one stage during a pupil's time at school. They also put the politically persuasive argument that teaching other faiths superlatively might encourage pupils to see religions other than Christianity as inferior, from which it is a short step to seeing citizens who are not Christian as less equal under the law than others.

No one should be surprised at this conflict, as it is effectively enshrined in the 1988 Act, which in turn reflects the dilemma which faced the Church of England bishops involved in its drafting. They wished neither to appear lukewarm to improving the quality of education about Christianity, nor to adopt a position about RE which might appear to do less than justice to all sections of the community.

Nevertheless, some Christians reject this "concession" to other faiths and they have campaigned to protect the teaching of Christianity from what they perceive as "confusion" with other religions.

They have tried to use the SCAA Monitoring Group and the latest government draft circular on RE effectively to compensate for the latitude of the 1988 Act. Therefore, both SCAA model syllabuses set out Christianity and the five other world religions separately. Significantly, though, a rubric qualifies this separation. It asserts that, while the model syllabuses have avoided the use of "themes" which might link different religions from the outset, schools may devise schemes of work which link issues.

I recognise the fears of the different SCAA factions, but I believe that the model syllabuses and the Dearing review give RE its best chance in years, as does the imaginative use of the independent schools' syllabus. It would be sad if anyone, especially over-defensive Christians, undermined this unique opportunity.

However, holding the agreement together is not enough. We have to convince parents, pupils and teachers of other subjects of the value and importance of RE. I hope they will see that RE, by its consideration of Christianity, world religions, and related beliefs such as Humanism, provides a framework of meaning into which other subjects may fit.

Copies of the Independent Schools' Syllabus can be obtained from the Rev Peter Jackson, Harrow School, High Street, Harrow, Middlesex

Credit for learning wherever it's due

A Channel 4 programme shortly before Christmas has created a sense of alarm about current reforms to the British vocational education system. Based on a report by Professor Alan Smithers, it claimed that our current vocational qualifications are unlikely to "bring Britain up to the standards of skill training of some of our European partners."

The report suggested that British trainees are under-taught, especially in the theoretical aspects of their studies; and also that, in some ways, they are wrongly taught. The overwhelming message was that British vocational education is too narrowly based, and too poorly respected. The approach of the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ), it claimed, would not solve either of these problems.

Those involved with the learning process know that serious development of technical skill cannot take place without a reliable foundation of general education. The approach of the NCVQ has been to achieve the theoretical understanding required through the competence of a job, and the development of qualifications which assess and recognise the required skills. The council has given responsibility to employers to define the standards of competence and to develop national vocational qualifications.

For the 16-19 age group, and some older learners, this approach may need to be supplemented by methods that

**A new scheme
rewards all
learners for
their efforts**

ensure that essential theoretical learning is achieved, at the same time as practical job-related skills are acquired. The new General National Vocational Qualifications, which address this issue, are quite distinct from the occupationally specific NVQs—a point that was perhaps insufficiently emphasised in Channel 4's programme.

The programme made several comparisons with other European countries. As a nation, however, we are too inclined to draw simplistic lessons from the experience of others. A solution is required that fits British educational contexts, yet addresses the underlying causes of low performance. In practical terms, this means that reform cannot be located in the vocational sector alone. To increase the number of people involved in education and training, and the levels they attain, there must be an erosion of the divide between types of learning. Craftspeople, technicians and professionals all require understanding and knowledge as well as a mixture of skills. The problem is therefore how to overcome the isolation of vocational education.

One way would be to design a new system of unified national qualifications that re-

quire broader-based learning. This approach might lead to a set of baccalaureates that reflect technical, classical, linguistic or other emphases, but share a large common core of knowledge.

However desirable such a reform might be, attention must be directed to the process by which it would be brought about. A new consensus is emerging in post-16 education and training around the concept of credit-based learning: the simple idea that all types of learning should lead to credit for the learner is catching on with employers, trainers, teachers and lecturers. Credit gives value to A-level or NVQ or degree learning, using an educational currency that is common to all. Learners then are free to accumulate credit at the pace that fits their circumstances.

Because the credit currency is common to all forms of learning, it becomes more feasible to devise learning programmes that mix elements currently separated into academic and vocational tracks.

The use of credit helps to reduce the disparity of esteem between different types of learning. Within an agreed framework, students and trainees could pursue paths that include, say, A-level and NVQ approaches to study, while universities, employers, professional bodies and others can lay down their specific entry requirements in terms of credit.

To establish a framework



Young people must not acquire technical skills at the expense of general knowledge

for credit requires a broad partnership. In Wales, a scheme funded by the Welsh Office through Ffwrwm is involving colleges of further education, training and enterprise councils, open college networks and others in a modularisation and credit-based development.

In London the private sector-led organisation, London First, which seeks to improve

and promote the capital, is strongly advocating such a solution. In partnership with the London Together movement, which has already brought colleges, universities, adult education, sixth-form education, TECs, employers and qualification authorities into a consensus for action, London First is seeking to create a London-wide credit framework, primed with

funds from Sainsbury plc and the nine London TECs.

**ANDREW MORRIS
JOHN ASHWORTH**

Andrew Morris is an assistant director of City and Islington College and vice-chair of the London Together credit group; John Ashworth is the director of the London School of Economics and chairs the London First education and training team.

The last of a dying breed

**A student teacher pleads for
valuable time in college**

NEXT MONTH, the House of Lords will begin its scrutiny of Government proposals for a reduction in the time a student teacher spends in college, with a subsequent increase in the practical time spent in school.

As a student teacher, this is one of the worst scenarios I could face. I may receive more practical experience, but without the direction college provides, I do not think I would be adequately prepared to deal with all the challenges of teaching.

Much valuable time is spent in college helping students to reflect on their school experiences and dis-

sects. To do the children justice, this means the student teacher has to revise all those subjects which have happily been laid to rest in the past.

So that students can realise how something can be taught, they must carry out the tasks themselves. This involves confronting basic mathematics again, thinking about molecules, music, information technology, the list goes on. The facilities college offers may be different, even better than those in a school. The children will benefit, too, if the student teacher's new ideas, developed in college, complement those of the class teacher.

Behaviour management is probably the most important, difficult and contentious area of teaching. Everyone has their own way of dealing with bad behaviour, and it is probably the foremost topic of conversation among student teachers. The ability to share ideas, away from the classroom and the college lecturer, is one of college's most valuable aspects.

Teaching is not a career which takes place in isolation. Teachers are increasingly expected to work alongside each other, to take individual subject responsibility and to help the rest of the staff to plan for that subject. Teachers discuss school-related issues with each other, and they share ideas and thoughts on individual children. College is the natural meeting place for the student teacher as our concerns are peculiar to our own, often ambiguous position. To have this cut back would be a waste of excellent teaching resources and friendship between future new teachers.

The race for jobs starts this month. We may be the last of a dying breed if the input of colleges is reduced. This will be a great loss to a profession that has been under attack.

VIEWPOINT



DEBORAH GREEN

How reading landed in the alphabet soup

Thirty years ago a radical new idea reached our schools—that was to teach practically all primary teachers and their pupils.

ITA, the initial teaching alphabet, had just finished its trials in "guinea pig" schools in Oxford, and was to be introduced with Government blessing into almost every primary school in England.

It was the brainchild of Sir James Pitman, whose distinguished grandfather, Sir Isaac Pitman, had invented shorthand nearly a century earlier.

Basically ITA was a new alphabet, consisting of 45 letters instead of the usual 26. It was thought that children experienced difficulty in starting to read with letters that made two different sounds,

such as the "t" in "big" and in "line".

New alphabets have been suggested throughout history. Elizabeth I's Chancellor, Sir Thomas Smith, published a book recommending "changes to the alphabet to represent adequately the English language". In 1644, Richard Hodges, a Southwark schoolmaster, published a similar book suggesting diacritical marks, or accents, to indicate the sound a letter should make. The eminent American Benjamin Franklin said in a letter of 1768: "Bad spellers are the product of bad rules, what is needed is a new alphabet." Matthew Arnold, Tennyson and George Bernard Shaw also expressed similar views.

With this distinguished

**In 1964 the initial teaching alphabet
was heralded as a revolution**

**can you reed this?
fiev yur oeldz cowl
thurttee yee rz agoe**

Cryptic ITA message for today's education reformers

background, ITA took education in England by storm. The Conservative Minister of Education, Sir Edward Boyle, referred to "these exciting and interesting experiments", and pledged to make a financial

contribution towards the costs. Teachers went on crash courses to learn how to teach the new revolutionary new method. Millions of pounds were involved as old stories were

reprinted in the new alphabet and sold to our schools. A few reading schemes were translated into ITA, including *Off to Play*, *Janet and John*, *Out and About*, *I Went Walking*, *Through the Garden Gate*, *I Know a Story*, *Once Upon a Time*.

Then the bubble burst. The trouble with starting to read with ITA was that although early progress was faster, the child eventually had to transfer back to the traditional alphabet, which some children found difficult. Moreover, parents were deterred from helping their children at home by this strange new writing that they had difficulty in reading themselves.

Three years later after the multi-million pound investment, national tests were al-

ready casting doubts on the value of ITA. It was generally agreed that the new system helped slow learners, but did little for the average bright child. When children were found to be going up to their comprehensive schools still on ITA, having never changed to the normal alphabet, ITA lost favour, and died.

In these days of radical changes in education, with the placing of "special needs" children into normal, large size classes with league tables published setting one school against another, and the same National Curriculum for all schools in all their diversity, it is perhaps worth thinking back to what the experts were telling us in 1964.

TONY SHEPPARD

The rise and rise of women journalists, from Lady Sarah Wilson in 1899 to Kate Adie today

ARTS

Rebel with a medieval cause

One hesitates to offer yet another interpretation of that weary phrase, back to basics. Nevertheless, the people packed into Westminster Abbey on Friday night must have felt that they were being transported as far back to basics as contemporary music is ever likely to go.

They heard scales dating from the first centuries of Christianity. They heard drones that were old when Socrates was young. They heard voices singing the sort of parallel chords to which this building resounded 600 years ago. Most of all, they experienced an utterly unmodern feeling of timeless ritual.

the Tories' back-to-basics campaign. Tavener is now viewed not as a superstitious freak several beads short of a full rosary, but as one of a number of composers (including Arvo Pärt and Henryk Gorecki) who have successfully rebelled against the postwar obsession with neurotic extremes, and revived the religious spirit, tranquillity and techniques of medieval composers. And far from being ridiculed, these born-again traditionalists have become cult figures. Recordings of Gorecki's Third Symphony and Tavener's cello concerto *The Protecting Veil* have sold hugely.

Tavener's case is all the more

As for the words, they conveyed a message of unwavering Christian ecstasy that would not seem incongruous in the *Book of Revelation*. In fact, they were written by Gregory Petrov, a priest incarcerated in a Russian prison camp in the 1940s. His life must have been wretched, yet he produced a work of unsurpassable beauty in praise of his God. No anger, no self-pity; he had transcended all that. He believed in paradise, and in his imagination he was already there.

Such remarkable words and music (brilliantly performed by BBC and Westminster Abbey forces under Martin Neary's direction) made *Akathist* of *Thanksgiving* the ideal piece with which to open the BBC's "Icons" festival, devoted to the music of John Tavener, who is 50 this year. Tavener's Russian Orthodox faith (he was converted in 1971) anchors not only his philosophy but also his music. And that is crucial. Most Western music is about "expressing yourself". Tavener, however, is attempting to provide the opposite: a music transcending ritual that sometimes sets him in contemplation of the divine. "I'm driven by a force, which I can't explain to re-establish a holy tradition of working, in an age which is unsympathetic to it," he once said.

Well, the climate is much more sympathetic to religious music than it once was. I don't know why, but I doubt that it has much to do with

the Tories' back-to-basics campaign. Tavener is now viewed not as a superstitious freak several beads short of a full rosary, but as one of a number of composers (including Arvo Pärt and Henryk Górecki) who have successfully rebelled against the postwar obsession with hermeticism and revived the religious spirit, tranquillity and techniques of medieval composers. And far from being ridiculed, these borragan traditionalists have become cult figures. Recordings of Górecki's Third Symphony and Tavener's cello concerto *The Protecting Veil* have sold hugely.

Taverner's case, is all the more remarkable since, in his twenties, he was practically the resident composer - to flower-power, London. He was befriended by the Beatles, and, Ringo, paid for his sprawling, psychedelic scores to be recorded on the Apple label - The BBC's festival has resurrected some radical epics from that era, and they

retain their spaced-out charm. For instance, the *Celtic Requiem* (atmospherically performed in the Barbican by the New London Children's Choir, Holes, Singers and City of London Sinfonia under Marty Brabins) still seems an ingenious fantasy on death rituals. Children's singing-games are juxtaposed with the Catholic requiem, a Victorian hymn, even wailing Irish bagpipers.

Taverner's obsession with death has never left him, although the irony with which it is treated in the *Celtic Requiem* has been increasingly suppressed. Perhaps that is regrettable...but it can partly be explained by his enhanced awareness of his own mortality; he came close to death after major heart surgery two years ago. He also clearly feels a kinship with writers such as Anne, Alkanott or John Banville, whose mystic St James's Park, Spain, mystic, St John of the Cross, who have transcended persecution in a way that mirrors the Christian belief in resurrection. Indeed, one can argue that every work Taverner has written in the past 20 years is concerned with the moment of rebirth.

He began this exploration with *Ultimos Ritos* (to be performed, as

A high-contrast, black and white photograph of a man in a suit standing in a doorway. He is holding a framed picture of a woman. The image is heavily stylized with a grainy, high-contrast aesthetic. The man is silhouetted against the bright light from the doorway. The woman in the picture is also silhouetted. The overall effect is dramatic and somber.

John Tavener at 50: the BBC's Ikons festival, which ends tonight at Westminster Cathedral, is devoted to his religious music

the festival's finale, in Westminster Cathedral tonight). That work is a massive commentary upon the moment in the "Crucifixus" of Bach's B Minor Mass when one astonishing key-change—from the expected minor cadence into the major—seems to evoke the whole

mystery of Christ's resurrection. Twenty years on, Tavener has written what could be regarded as *Ultimos Ritos* in miniature. Called *Song for Athene*, it was commissioned by the BBC and premiered by the BBC Singers under Simon Joly on Saturday.

Athene Mariades was a young Greek actress killed last year. In her memory Tavener has set lines from *Hamlet* and the Orthodox funeral service. The voices rise and fall in simple parallel thirds over a drone. Then, at the end, they turn majestically and movingly from

minor to major. As in Bach's "Crucifixus", the meaning is unmistakable — and something poignant, beautiful and truthful is expressed in fewer notes than the average pop song. The composer who can do that richly deserves his own festival.

ARTS BRIEFING

Singing honours

CECILIA BARTOLI and Thomas Hampson were declared the singers of the year in the Classical Music Awards held at the Albert Hall in London on Friday. Jose Carreras was deemed the year's musical personality, while the instrumentalist award went to the viola player Yuri Bashmet.

Other musicians honoured included the 12-year-old violinist Sarah Chang (newcomer of the year), the conductor Valery Gergiev and the Kronos Quartet. Lutoslawski's Fourth Symphony, heard at the Proms last summer, was chosen as composition of the year, while the ubiquitous Third Symphony by Gorecki was, perhaps inevitably, declared the "recording of the year".

● **MEANWHILE**, the winners of the Shakespeare Globe Classic Awards were announced last night. Selected by a panel chaired by Charles Osborne, the awards went to: Robert Stephens (best actor, for *Leary*); Penny Downie (best actress, for *Portia*); Adrian Noble (best director, for *Winter's Tale*); Thelma Holt and Matthew Warchus (best production and best newcomer respectively, for *Much Ado about Nothing*); and Rex Gibson, who won the Sam Wanamaker International Shakespeare Globe Award for his Cambridge School Shakespeare Series.

● **MOSI** unlikely musical combination of the year so far? That accolade must be bestowed on last week's recording sessions in Vienna, when the English conductor John Eliot Gardiner — hitherto best known for the authenticity of his Baroque performances — teamed up for the first time with the Vienna Philharmonic to record Lehár's frothy operetta *The Merry Widow*. The Deutsche Grammophon recording is due out in the autumn.

● **STREET** theatre of a very upmarket variety happens in the West End of London at 11.30 this morning, when Sir Derek Jacobi lays a wreath at the Henry Irving Memorial in Irving Street, behind the National Portrait Gallery. It will mark the centenary of the Theatrical Management Association, founded by Irving. The wreath will be made from flowers mentioned in Shakespeare's plays, and will afterwards be displayed in the Irving Room at the Barbican Theatre, where Jacobi is starring in *Macbeth*.

THEATRE

Ordinary heroes

**The Three
Musketeers**
Riverside Studios

ONCE upon a time this dashing historical romance may have been staged with a perfect conviction in its ridiculous values. An early-Victorian production at the Lyceum, shortly after the Dumas novel appeared, could probably be copied the same with a dedicated swordsmen, a sincerely swashbuckling Buckingham and a queen barely able to move under the weight of her authentic farthingale. "One for all, and all for one!" the heroes cried, and lads in the audience rushed off to become soldiers, even though the nation's fate was never likely to hang upon a pair of diamond studs foolishly given to a foreign lover.

We have not lost our belief in heroes but in the literary conceit that entangles heroism with undying love for a lady. If we still try to take the drama seriously, the task is made impossible by the presence of scheming Cardinal Richelieu (Monty Python must take some blame) and the muske-

I never expect to see a production that regards the story seriously, but I hope to be offered a better spoofed version than this draggy effort by MTP, the team that devised *Thunderbirds F&B*.

Dumas himself was alert to the comic inaccuracy of the title — there are four musketeers — and did it as a tease. Following his lead, MTP present the play with just three actors. Complex role-hopping means that all three get to play D'Artagnan — for the most part separately but, in the acrobatic antics on the chateau roof, three D'Artagnans are on stage together.

Ominous themes from Tchaikovsky signal passions once considered heartfelt but



Robertson, Thirtle and Dawson go musketeering

now mocked with exuberant dance steps or routines with invisible horses. D'Artagnan's steed is named Buttercup, the joke apparently being that she is a cart horse. An inordinate amount of time is wasted while he staggers around with the creature on his shoulders. Inevitably, several incidents are ingenious, attractive or both. The chaps turn from Cardinal's men to King's men simply by flapping their tabards from red to blue. They act the women well: Robert Thirte's Milady mysteriously, darkly beautiful; Gavin Rob-

ertron's Queen shaking her head over unnamed sorrows: Andrew Dawson's tall Constance tremulously in love.

For me the best moment in *Thunderbirds* FAB was the little scene Dawson created with his fingers. Likewise here, when he delineates a miniature chateau in the air, flags fluttering, portcullis rising, guards stamping to attention — just for an instant something special emerges before the ordinary rump takes over again.

JEREMY KINGSTON

ROCK

Rapped up

THE Tottenham Sound always had more to do with the Dave Clark 5 than with the soul pop of the 1960s. It may be time for a rewrite. North London's Urban Species are enough to give British urban fusion a good name.

Even that description may offend the collective, who resist all labelling and like to lay out their wars as the 'Urban Species experience'. They also like to dance, rap and dispense sentiments of brotherly love, and squeezed their eight-strong line-up into a sold-out Jazz Café for an exhilarating performance.

Thanks to Gilles Peterson's admirable 'Talkin' Loud' compilation, the band's cosmopolitan colleagues include jazz-soul aggregation Incognito and French rapper MC Solaar, the band has moved quietly through the ranks, debuting on the label's second sampler with the

accomplished piece of hip-hop rap "Hide and Seek." After a further single and EP last year, plus extensive live work, they now find themselves in the Radio 1 playlist thanks to the classy soul piece "Spiritual Love".

Live, their success builds on the strong presence of chief rapper Minto and toaster Doctor Slim, but draws further energy from a splendid back-up team that includes DJ Renegade administering funky samples at his turntables, an impossibly agile full-time dancer named Slewfoot, the honey-voiced soul

Such a combination of committed spirits meant there was always something to watch and more to listen to. Minto's peace-and-love raps were intelligently written, genuinely delivered and stay fresh thanks to the contagious rhythms. Cheezee's fine vocals gave a sheen to a triumphant performance of "Spiritual Love" and they picked up further points by poking light fun at themselves on an absurd, breakneck version of "The Ropes (Tricks of the Trade)" before settling down to a slower, but no less forceful, rendition. If justice prevails, their forthcoming debut album *Listen* will allow music students everywhere to discover a new Species.

PAUL SEXTON

The OFSTED experience

The new privatised inspection system is now sweeping through schools. The TES talks to some of the first survivors

OUT JANUARY 28

TES

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THE TIMES MONDAY JANUARY 24 1994

Anne McElvoy charts the rise of women journalists, from outlandish exceptions a hundred years ago to a fact of media life

A kind of monster

When Henrietta Stackpole in Henry James's *Portrait of a Lady* travels to England, her host Ralph Touchet is apprehensive at the prospect of meeting this mutation of nature: a woman reporter. "She must be a kind of monster," he muses. "A female interviewer is a reporter in petticoats." This is an exhaustive account of women's battle to join a profession dominated by men: the hardening and varied tale of the metamorphosis — in less than a century — of the female journalist from outlandish exception to an unremarkable fact of media life.

The *Guardian's* Suzanne Moore still felt compelled to protest in a recent polemic that men tend to be entrusted with reporting and analysis, policy and events because they are prized for the clarity of their minds. Women, by contrast, are judged towards "human interest" stories because they are good listeners and sensitive souls. As this account ably demonstrates, however, the profession was only opened up to women thanks to their determination to become involved in the reporting of wars, disasters and political campaigns.

For independently-minded women at the turn of the century, journalism provided an escape from social constraints or unhappy marriages. Lady Sarah Wilson, daughter of the Duke of Marlborough, fled to South

BATTILING FOR NEWS

The Rise of the Woman Reporter

By Anne McElvoy

Harper & Row, £19.99

Africa in 1899 to escape the tedium of the London social season, and reported the siege of Mafeking for the *Daily Mail*. But editors, while they grudgingly accepted stories from women in far-flung places, were still wary of having them around in their London offices, a climate which (as one male novelist remarked in 1909) was apt to make them "bitter and rather hard... you cannot wash off the stains of Fleet Street."

The suffragette movement inspired many women writers, and finally convinced editors that certain home stories also called for the feminine touch; but there was still considerable resistance on the part of both their employers and the Army to using them as official correspondents in the First World War. Spain provided the turning point for



Pioneers: Adie (left) and Cowles

female war reporters, who were able to use the radical commitments of the socialists as a lever to further their claims to equality in the press pack.

Two of the century's outstanding women journalists, Martha Gellhorn and Virginia Cowles, went on to make their lasting mark on this fertile journalistic landscape. Both, of course, were open to the charge of using their looks and charms to gain stories; neither gave

a hoot. Several of the women interviewed by Anne Sebba admit to using their feminine wiles in their work. Rarely has a fuss been made about the masculine wiles of shared sporting or drinking interests, let alone the old school tie or regiment.

Journalism is essentially a meritocracy, in which many different talents are equally valid and useful. An intellectual such as Sheila Grant-Duff, who tirelessly opposed appeasement, traded on her powers of analysis, the redoubtable Clare Hollingworth on her bravery. The preternaturally competitive Anne Sharples, who covered Suez for the *Evening Standard*, was not above pulling out the telephone wire after she had filed to scupper the chances of competitors to match her story. Cowles sought out high-level contacts with such prodigious skill that, when she complained directly to Eisenhower that she was being denied access to the front line, she received the memorable reply, "Miss Cowles can go where she likes."

The author does not overlook the toll of the profession on women: there are sobering

accounts of destroyed marriages, guilt-ridden relationships with children and full-scale breakdowns resulting from life under the Damocles' sword of the daily deadline. It is a form of stress which, as the psychiatrist who treated Anne Sharples after her collapse remarked, "is exactly how they introduce neurosis in rats."

The single most frustrating aspect of *Battling for News* is that it ends too early, with descriptions of the last generation of women to see themselves as pioneers, such as Kate "We can't start without her" Adie, or Diana Goodman, who in 1966 became the first woman to run a foreign bureau for the BBC.

Although she includes the events of 1989 in her account, she greatly under-represents the number of young women who reported them and over-estimates their rarity value. Few women under 40 are interviewed in the whole account, which makes it feel somewhat dated. I should have liked to read a more thorough treatment of Yugoslavia — the first war, I believe, in which women correspondents stopped being an oddity and became, for better or worse, just other names on the Bosnia rota.

● Anne McElvoy, presently Times bureau chief in Moscow, has reported from East Berlin, Croatia and Bosnia.

THEORY OF WAR

By Joan Brady

Abacus, £6.99

AMERICAN-born Brady, who recently won the Whitbread Novel Award, has used her own grandfather's life to tell the excruciating story of "bounden boy" Jonathan Carrick, sold into white slavery for \$25 after the American Civil War. Jonathan's life as a victim of this rarely acknowledged aspect of American history is a struggle first for self-preservation and then dignity, but his lifelong hatred for his master's son overtakes him to destroy them both. This is an allegory of the human condition told in a passionate voice.

HOLLYWOOD VS AMERICA

By Michael Medved

HarperCollins, £7.99

MEDVED'S fiery diatribe against Hollywood was dismissed by many last year as the frustrated outpourings of a bewildered reactionary. Certainly his style is trenchant, somewhat crude and a little humorless. Yet no one who has more than a passing knowledge of contemporary cinema ought to be able to disagree with his central contention that, today, our moral sensibilities are under assault from a relentless and insidious barrage of screen sex and violence. More than ever it seems that, rotten with decadence, Hollywood lacks the vitality to be sensuous. Medved's is a welcome voice raised in protest against modern cant.

ROUND ABOUT A POUND A WEEK

By Maud Pember Reeves

Virago, £7.99

THIS pioneering survey of the lives of the London working class was made by a group of Fabian women who descended on the households of Lambeth in the four years before the outbreak of the First World War. This detailed record of grossly overcrowded families existing in small damp rooms, mainly on a diet of bread, marmite and scrag ends, is made more shocking by the fact that these people were not at the bottom of the social ladder. They were the deserving poor, eking out an existence on a wage of about a pound a week. The patterns of poverty in this book are still familiar. It is as disturbing now as when it first shocked complacent, moralising, late Edwardian England.

● Contributors: Katherine Bergen, Jason Cowley, Hazel Leslie

Gardens as landscape paintings

Marcus Binney

THE WORLD HERITAGE OF GARDENS

By Dusan Ogria

Thames & Hudson, £24.95

The best ideas in garden design are often the simplest. From the many superb photographs in this lavish book here are some which stand out: beeches clipped into pencil-thin columns at Beloeil; swooping topiary walls at the Villa Celsa; gently humped-garden bridges covered with turf or edged with moss in Japan; a broad, calm stepped canal at Courances; pairs of single fountain jets over-arching the Long Pool at the Generalife; the beauty of miniature islands studded with trees and of lawns sloping to the very edge of the water; modern housing completely hidden behind clipped creepers in Denmark; an arch of rocks over the lake at Kromlau; and the grass pyramid at Brantitz in which Prince Pückler-Muskau was buried.

This book has the noble aim of establishing gardening as a major part of cultural history. Yet the examples chosen only half prove this point. The question for debate is whether the design of great gardens is substantially a branch of architecture or whether landscape gardening should be considered an art form in its own right.

Much of the visual appeal of medieval monastery gardens, as well as mosque gardens, lies in the beauty of the joisters around them. The formal style of gardening in both Italy and France depends heavily on architectural forms

and features: terraces, balustrades, steps, cascades and fountains — while in China and Japan artfully contrived rocks and exquisitely raked gravel play a comparable role. Even in English landscape gardens there is a tendency for the temples and follies to take over every vista.

Sticking speaking it should be perfectly possible to create a great and beautiful garden using only living material: trees, shrubs, flowers and grasses.

A truly artistic garden must be architect, painter and sculptor, yet be able to work without brick or stone, pigment or statuary. Hedges and grass create a sense of both space and enclosure. Nature itself provides a range of colour and texture, in leaves as well as flowers, richer than any paintbox, whether you are looking for harmony or for contrast. Pruning can be practised with as much art as topiary.

Paint your prospects, said Pope, a skill in which the Japanese can excel above all others. The Moss garden at Saiho-ji is one of dozens in Kyoto presenting a continuing



An example of the Baroque garden, the Ladies' Basin is circled by a walk of beech-trees clipped to imitate pillars and arches at Beloeil in Belgium

series of perfectly framed pictures whichever way you look. The book also prompts the question of whether a major contemporary style exists in gardening parallel to modernism in architecture or abstraction in art.

The Vicomte de Noailles' cubist Guévrekian garden in Provence was very much a loner, and like many consciously modern gardens relied on gravel and containers. Another ingenious example (alas hideous in colour) consists of a rainbow-coloured bands of flowers interlaced

like ribbons along a hillside. This is the creation of a painter and the landscape architect Hans Luz who also designs artificial trees consisting of stands overflowing with pots of geraniums. Tribute is paid to the spectacular garden restorations

and recreations of recent decades — Painshill in England, Het Loo in Holland and Gunston Hall in Virginia. The great cascades at Saint-Cloud and Sceaux show that gardens can survive even when the great houses they once adorned have vanished.

If anyone still needs convincing that Hyde Park would be an infinitely better place if no tall buildings overlooked it, let them study Professor Ogria's view of Prospect Park in New York, a sylvan valley where not a single skyscraper is to be seen.

Master mistresses

Fiona Pitt-Kethley

THE PENGUIN BOOK OF GAY SHORT STORIES

Edited by David Leavitt and Mark Mitchell

Viking, £15.99

I started reading *The Penguin Book of Gay Short Stories* with grave misgivings. Should authors be grouped by their sexuality? By the time I got to the end of David Leavitt's thoughtful introduction, most of my initial misgivings had evaporated. While the anthology is entered on the homosexual experience of life, the authors are both men and women, straight and gay. It proves that all that gay men can be is not everything else besides — neither or vicious, athletic or ugly, responsible or irresponsible, creative or dull. One characters have good relationships with women, others do not. Some are lonely, some are gregarious.

Leavitt and Mitchell have mined their choice to 20th-century writers in English. Most are short stories, though there are a few extracts from novels. We start with H. Lawrence's exploration of male tenderness set against English countryside and end with A.M. Homes. Her tale about a boy's erotic day with his younger sister's Barbie doll is comic and forgettable. Barbie talks back with lines like "Hey, big guy, don't I even get a Hello?" Some of the early pieces are concerned with the unfairness of the law towards homosexuals. E.M. Forster paints a vivid portrait of an unlucky likeman in a canary yellow shirt who gets caught while a gentleman partner gets



"Relief", a 1981 photograph by Jan Groover, who is best known for her dramatic still lifes. Taken from *Jan Groover: Photographs* (Little, Brown, £37.50)

away scot free. The gentleman is racked with guilt, but realises that owing up will not save the man. Stories from later periods deal with closeted gays who do not run the risk of arrest for their activities, yet choose to keep them secret from their wives and families.

Most of the pieces, from the last ten years centre on the reaction of the gay community to deaths from AIDS. Humbur is mixed with pathos. Allen Barnett has his group of gay men going for gastronomic weekends together — devouring gourmet meals could lessen the most obvious wasting effects of AIDS. Some of the group are healthy, some infected. It's a vivid portrait. Sadly, Barnett died not long after writing the one novel that it comes from.

Leavitt and Mitchell have been careful to choose a good many pieces which celebrate the normality of gay men. Most of the heroes are surrounded by love and affection

from family or friends. However, J.R. Ackerley, who states that his love life began with a goliwog and ended with an Alsatian bitch, comes over as singularly cold.

Most of the chosen writers are strong on description of the male form in its many permutations. John Cheever's enjoyable story of a prison escape comments, in passing, on the variety of penises on view in the communal lavatory: "black, white, red, yellow, lavender, brown, warty, wrinkled, comely, and silken". There is a sensuality in the writing rarely found in heterosexual novels.

In his introduction Leavitt charts his early reading of gay literature and his own reaction against the kind of books that give the impression that sex is only for the beautiful. The country that produced Hollywood has a lot to answer for in this respect. I am thankful for an anthology that gives a different view by celebrating the diversity of human appearance and sexuality.

The diary of a single mother

Christina Koning

ON THE SIDE OF THE ANGELS

The Journals of Elizabeth Smart, Vol 2

Edited by Alice Van Wart

HarperCollins, £14.99

Elizabeth Smart's literary reputation rests on a single work: a highly charged, intensely subjective account of an adulterous love affair, *By Grand Central Station* (1944). First published in 1945, the novel was an instant success, achieving notoriety when (in a campaign orchestrated by the author's mother) it was banned in Canada, and later acquiring a cult following which has kept it in print ever since.

By *Grand Central Station* describes the early stages of the author's lifelong relationship with the poet George Barker, and was written when Smart was pregnant with the first of their four children, at a time when Barker was temporarily reconciled with his wife. This pattern, as Smart's journals show, was to recur throughout their affair. Much of the material collected in *Necessary Secrets*, the first volume of her journals, was transcribed often without much alteration — into her fictional account.

Smart's journals were in fact her working notebooks, in which she recorded moods, impressions and ideas for poems and stories, as well as the day-to-day minutiae of her life. But whereas the early journals, covering the years 1933-1941, are packed with incident, chronicling the writer's travels around Europe and America, as well as the beginning of her romance with Barker, the later ones, written between 1941 and 1968, are less eventful. During much of this period Smart was occupied with the demands of her growing family: the rest of her time, to judge from this account of it, was divided

between her journalism and coping with the intermittent visits of her lover.

Unsurprisingly, perhaps, she found little time for her own writing. The extraordinary success of her first book seems also to have inhibited her — so much so that it was not until 30 years later that she produced a second work. These journals reflect Smart's repeated attempts to get the better of her writer's block: that daily battle with "despair and despondency and the blank page" which became, increasingly, her main subject.

The prevailing mood of these collected writings is one of frustration and self-doubt — an impression doubtless exaggerated by the fact that Smart only seems to have written at length when she was unhappy: otherwise confining herself to brief notes about children's illnesses and shopping trips, which make rather dull reading.

Alice Van Wart has made a workmanlike job of condensing and annotating the material at her disposal (some 158 notebooks in all) in order to produce this book and its companion volume. Despite these editorial interventions, however, one is left with the feeling that there is not enough of substance here, either in terms of biographical interest or of literary merit, to justify such extensive treatment.

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Sweet success and bitter pill

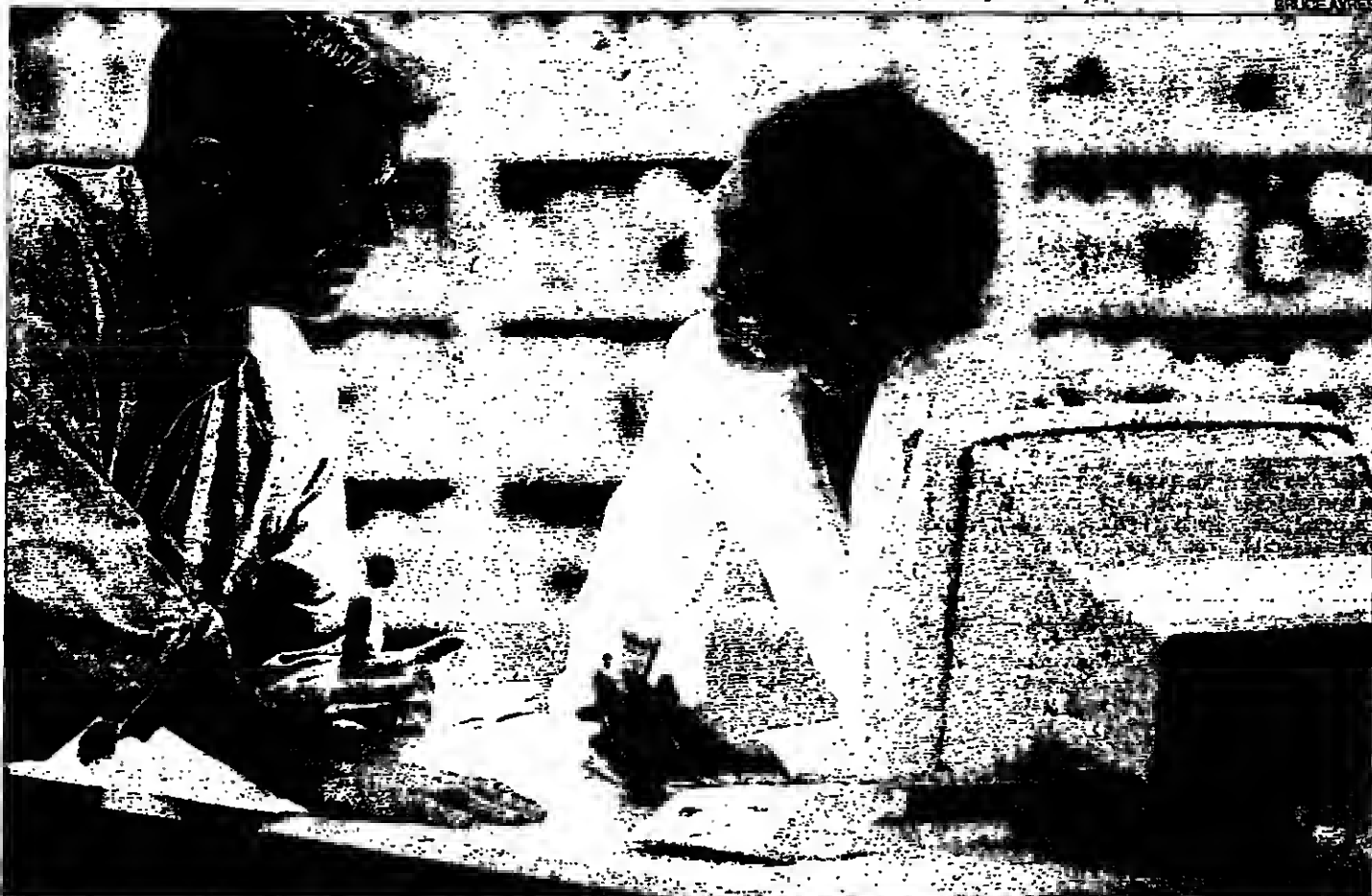
Britain's money spinning drugs industry is under threat at home and abroad, reports Sarah Bagnall

Britain's pharmaceutical industry has had a balance of trade surplus every year for the past 41 years and has breezed through two-and-a-half years of recession without batting an eyelid. The industry is expected to contribute an international trade surplus of about £1.5 billion in 1993, an improvement of £200 million from the previous year and a far cry from the £31 million surplus of 1951. Exports have grown steadily during the past decade, rising from £78 million in 1982 to £3 billion in 1992, placing the industry in second place behind power-generating machinery in overseas earnings.

In sharp contrast, Britain's manufacturing industry made a trade deficit of £10.1 billion for the tenth year running in 1992. This equals a daily deficit of £28 million. The drug industry owes its success to a highly innovative history coupled with a healthy investment in research and development. This is reflected by UK companies having six drugs among the top 20 revenue-earning drugs in the world. Glaxo tops the list with the anti-ulcer remedy Zantac, the world's biggest selling drug, earning more than £2.1 billion of sales in the last financial year.

The other top selling medicines are Ventolin, the asthma drug produced by Glaxo; Zovirax, Wellcome's anti-viral treatment; Tagamet, SmithKline Beecham's anti-ulcer drug with almost identical action to Zantac; Augmentin, SB's antibiotic; and Tenormin, the heart drug produced by Zeneca. These drugs have helped British companies feature among the top drug companies in the world. Of the top 50 companies, six are British, 15 American, ten Japanese, seven German and four Swiss. The UK giants are Glaxo, SmithKline Beecham, Wellcome, Zeneca, Boots and Fisons.

But there are threats to the



A pharmacist gives advice: the UK pharmaceutical giants are Glaxo, SmithKline Beecham, Wellcome, Zeneca, Boots and Fisons.

industry's long-term profitability. Competition is fierce — with product replacement becoming increasingly rapid. As the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) admits, "There can be little doubt that the pre-eminent position of the UK pharmaceutical industry today is being seriously challenged by our international trading rivals".

One of the threats facing drug companies is healthcare reform in all of the world's six largest pharmaceutical markets — the US, Japan, Germany, France, Italy and the UK. Ballooning current account deficits have intensified governments' intentions to make swinging cuts to the cost of providing healthcare.

The most significant changes have been in America and Germany. The Seehofer reforms in Germany have reduced the total market sales of drugs by 21 per

cent, while in Italy the De Lorenzo reforms have limited total market growth to 3.4 per cent in the year to April 1993.

According to the ABPI, government actions have severe knock-on

'Japan has begun to buy up the European arms of drug companies'

effects for drug companies. The UK government's unexpected move to amend the "limited list" scheme, restricting further the range of medicines available to National Health Service patients, is estimated to cost the industry £400 million a year in lost sales.

This, coupled with other changes, threatens to choke off the funds available to the industry for research and development. The stockbroking house Paribas Capital Markets maintains that new products are critical to future earnings growth. "It follows that a strong correlation exists between future earnings and what companies spend in research and development today," it says.

The ABPI agrees. "Failure to maintain research and innovation will destroy the UK industry's competitive place in the world market," it adds.

Another threat to the UK drugs industry is the decline in educational standards at home. The increasing anti-science bias is causing concern among companies that the country's scientific research base is being devalued. Some scientists are beginning to up sticks and depart overseas and as a result most of the

new wave of innovative products are beginning to emerge abroad.

"The drug industry in the UK has thrived on a very sound scientific base," says Ben Hayes the ABPI. "There are concerns that the UK will not be as successful in providing scientists in the future."

Attempts by Japan to inject life into its flagging pharmaceutical sector are causing small and very distinct rumbles of concern.

Japanese companies, such as Yamaguchi, have begun to buy up the European manufacturing arms of drug companies. Pharmaceuticals is Japan's only industry which has consistently made a trade deficit.

Japan's pharmaceuticals trade deficit with the UK alone was £134 million in 1992 having exported £28 million and imported £162 million. This compares to exports to the UK in 1982 of £2 million and imports from the UK of £49 million.

Agency promises to open Europe

The EC's new medicines advisory body starts work next year and should help cut delays in licensing new drugs

Drug companies want a system of pan-European licensing for new products, so that they can avoid having to plough through time-consuming bureaucratic systems in each country, writes Sarah Bagnall.

Towards that end, a new agency, the European Medicines Evaluation Agency (EMEA), is to open in London from the beginning of next year. EMEA, seen as the second biggest prize for British business in last year's carve up of the Euro-institutions, will control the EC-wide drug licensing system and the safety of medicines.

EMEA will monitor the effectiveness and quality of medicines in the EC, as well as stimulate innovation and technical co-operations between member states.

Drug companies hope that the agency, which will initially employ 150 people, will cut the regulatory delays in getting the go-ahead for new products. At present, a company may have to wait three years before gaining approval.

Dr George Butler, the head of international regulatory development at Zeneca, says: "We would like to have our products introduced across the EC within a 12-month period of an application."

Procedures need to be quick, as patent law means that the revenue-generating years of a product can be paralysed by slow licensing approvals. This is of little comfort to companies as it restricts the time they have to develop a drug.

Companies will not be able to submit new drugs to a single member state, but when they want a simultaneous "EC" licence, they will have to go to the agency, just as American firms

have to go through the US Food and Drug Administration. EMEA operates a centralised procedure for "high-tech" products and other "high-tech" medicines, while approval for all other medicines will be decentralised by one member state, which will be recognised by all other member states.

If any member state rejects a new medicine, the decision on whether to grant a licence will pass to the agency's committee for proprietary medicinal products, comprising two representatives from each member state and two from the EC.

The committee's recommendation then requires approval by a standing committee which operates under a weighted EC voting system.

Licensing delays can add to the costs

Similarly, if one member state wants to withdraw a licence from a product, the agency has a mechanism for dealing with the request and the resulting decision will apply throughout the EC.

Dr Roger Bolton, the regulatory policy manager at Zeneca, says: "It is all or nothing." This will remove anomalies thrown up by the present system. Last June, for instance, the United Kingdom decided to defist Halcion, a sleeping pill produced by Upjohn, on safety grounds. The drug had not been marketed in Britain since October 1991. However, the product is still available in other EC countries.

EMEA's rules mean that any country concerned about the safety of a drug can take steps to restrict its use in that country, perhaps taking immediate action to ban the drug's distribution. However, the final decision by EMEA is binding. So if the agency says the drug must stay, that overrides the country's first decision.

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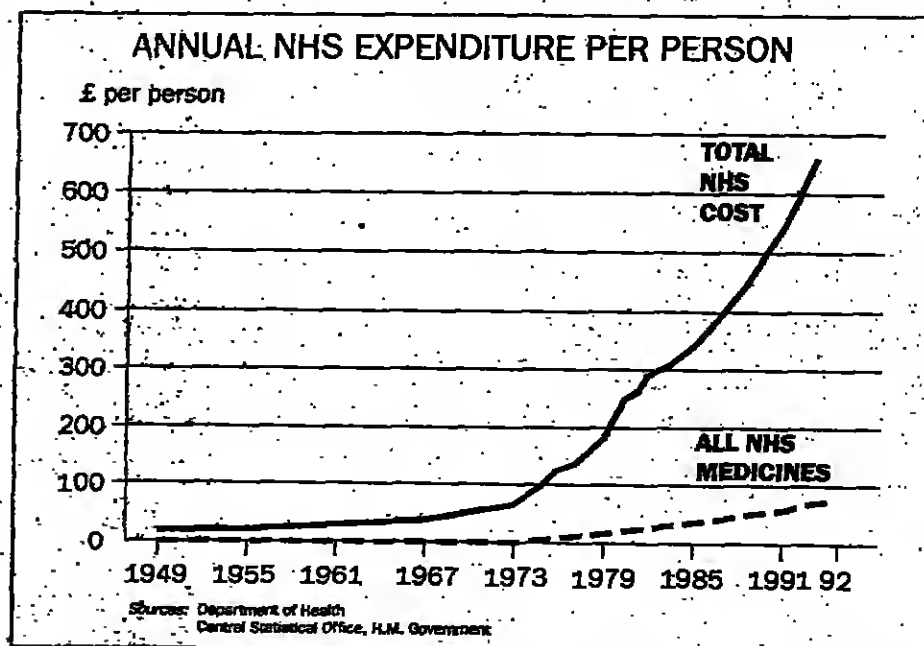
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The NHS Drugs Bill – seen in perspective

'The NHS Drugs Bill is currently running at seven times the rate of inflation – that is simply unacceptable.'

Mrs Virginia Bottomley, Secretary of State for Health, speaking at the Conservative Women's conference at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London, on June 5, 1993.



The chart shown above demonstrates that over the years NHS medicines expenditure has risen at a much lower rate than NHS costs generally. But for this therapeutic 'conservatism', higher expenditures on medicines would undoubtedly have produced considerably greater savings throughout the rest of the National Health Service.

When it comes to curtailing health care costs, medicines are the solution not the problem.

THE BRITISH PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY
HELPING TO KEEP BRITAIN HEALTHY



The price of health

Bill Cater reports on the industry's response to ministerial threats of reductions in NHS spending on drugs

Seen from Whitehall, it probably looked like being a popular show, with that nice Virginia Bottomley as heroine and greedy drug firms as baddies. Mrs Bottomley would administer a few firm attacks and save lots of money, and nearly everyone would go home happy, especially the Treasury.

But the latest bout of the long-running argument between the

Department of Health, doctors and the pharmaceutical industry has not worked out that way. So far, the drug companies have been able to appear as bright, people with patients' interests at heart and a

desire to turn an honest million or so. Mrs Bottomley and her department, on the other hand, have been made to appear penny-pinching, putting short-term gains above patients' health.

It all began back in 1992, when Mrs Bottomley, in a speech to medical journalists, declared she wanted more people treated, waiting times cut, better quality services and "to apply the brake to the soaring rise in the NHS drugs bill". The drugs bill, at £3 billion and increasing at 12 per cent every year, she said, was rising faster than NHS costs as a whole. Mrs Bottomley added that she would like to negotiate a new pricing scheme; she hoped she could maintain voluntary arrangements and she would be fair while striking a hard bargain. In fact, prices were cut by 2.5 per cent, less than some in the industry feared, but profits, says the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI), were cut hard.

Mrs Bottomley was also going to look for ways to tackle over-prescribing ("the volume of unused and unwanted medicines in the bathroom cabinets of the nation is testimony to a serious problem") and welcomed the increase in generic prescribing — prescribing the drug, not a particular maker's branded, often dearer version.

The drug companies say this all makes it hard to recover the cost of a new drug, between £100 million and £150 million, thus hampering medical progress.

Over-prescribing? On the contrary, says the ABPI, by European standards British doctors under-prescribe, depriving patients of more costly but more effective new medicines.

Mrs Bottomley's NHS Selected List is unpopular, too. This bans drugs that a panel of experts considers too expensive, compared with others with the same effect. Doctors dislike it because it suggests some far-away expert knows more about old Mrs Brown's bad leg than the GP on the spot. ABPI members see it as an unofficial

extra price control through implied threats that a medicine could be blacklisted.

But it is Mrs Bottomley's soaring-claims claim which draws the greatest scorn from drug houses and doctors. The price of medicines fell slightly over the years, they say: the total bill is up mainly because people, living longer, need more medicine. What really soared were hospital costs.

The doctors, through the British Medical Association (BMA), add that new drugs, for a wider range of illnesses, add to the bill. So do drugs that replace surgery, but they also save £1,000-a-week hospital bills. NHS waiting lists keep patients hanging about, swallowing medicines, because they cannot get into hospital for treatment.

Drug treatment for all the estimated six million Britons with raised blood pressure would cost the NHS about £300 million a year more but save heart attacks, strokes, and £800-million-a-year hospital costs. Medicine costs the

average person less than 17p a day.

In speeches and publications, the pharmaceutical industry hammered its points. In more peaceful surroundings, the argument goes on before three committees.

The Commons select committee on health, before which both the ABPI and the BMA have appeared, hopes to report in March. A Department of Health working group has been meeting to discuss prices. A third group, from the department, the ABPI, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Treasury, is around a table considering the place of the pharmaceutical industry in the British economy.

Pharmaceuticals are Britain's second biggest export, even ahead of North Sea oil. High-tech, science-based, clean, highly profitable, with enormous potential, it is the sort of industry governments dream of. The industry argues that if we cut its profits too far, it will move overseas; if we pay up more willingly for NHS drugs, it will flourish and reward us all.

The last word could be that of an Edinburgh GP in an ABPI book, *Rationing Medicine*. "Who knows," said Dr Ian McKee, "a well-informed public may agree spending decisions that more politicians are frightened to take."



The Government's strong medicine has cut NHS drug bills



Dr John Dixon, left, Sarah King and Dr Steve Connolly at Fison's new Loughborough laboratories

Hot on the trail of the magic bullets

Recent research has shown the benefits of aspirin, the success of an anti-cancer drug based on extracts of the Pacific Yew tree, and progress with the first experiments in treating inherited diseases by gene therapy.

These findings provide an insight into the way the process of drug discovery has evolved from a matter of luck to a systematic science. Today's aspirin is the synthetic version of a substance that the Rev Edmund Stone, of Chipping Norton, found had analgesic properties when chewing on the bark of a willow tree 200 years ago.

The bulk manufacture of aspirin only became possible a century later when its active molecule was synthesised. For many generations it was the only effective treatment for headaches, aches and swelling.

A vast analysis, completed earlier this month for the British Heart Foundation and Imperial Cancer Research Fund, compared the results of 300 recent studies of aspirin from around the world. While the individual studies were inconclusive, Professor Richard Peto and Dr Roy Collins, of Oxford University, showed that 100,000 premature deaths a year could be prevented if patients with a history of heart disease took the equivalent of just one junior aspirin a day.

Developing new medicines is a systematic science

The search for medically useful plant molecules that can be reproduced in the laboratory continues. Taxol, the extract of the Pacific Yew, is one of them.

But many of today's successful drugs were discovered by screening thousands of chemical substances synthesised every year, in the hope of finding a "magic bullet".

In a typical year, the largest pharmaceutical firms synthesise 4,000 to 5,000 new chemical molecules. Only a handful go on to further testing, with 1 in 10,000 eventually reaching the market.

Although laboratories still synthesise thousands of molecules, laboratories have developed techniques like structure-based drug design. Research begins by first identifying in the body a molecular target, or receptor, with which a substance — as yet-to-be-specified and then synthesised — must interact.

Developments in computer graphics and molecular biology have created new ways for drug developers to see a detailed image of a target molecule, and then work

backwards to design the most effective therapeutic drug. Zeneca is typical of a leading international drug firm with more than 500,000 of its own registered compounds at its disposal. But the list of synthetic chemicals has been joined by growing numbers of NBEs — new biological entities.

Of the world's 50 best-selling medicines, 48 are of synthetic origin. Five of the world's 20 most prescribed drugs were discovered and developed in Britain by Glaxo, SmithKline Beecham, Zeneca and Wellcome.

Those products are the result of spending on research and development that has quadrupled over the past 10 years to more than £1,300 million a year. And competition is fierce. Of the world's leading ten products in 1992, only one remained in the top ten in 1992.

Spending on research has escalated because the cost of unearthing an important new drug has risen from £50 million in 1985 to £200 million in 1990. And while a successful discovery can have a significant impact on a drug company's earnings, there are plenty of examples of a product coming to the end of its patent life and there is no successor product ready to market.

PEARCE WRIGHT

The discovery of the secret of DNA has spawned various entrepreneurs

The biotechnology industry could dominate the development of new drugs and ultimately change the way that medicine is practised by the year 2000.

That prediction comes from evidence submitted to a recent inquiry by a House of Lords select committee into the regulation and global competitiveness of the UK biotechnology industry, which now has more than 70 companies. The expertise of these new biopharmaceutical companies is in molecular biology and genetic engineering. Dr Peter Fellner is chief executive of one of them, Celltech, in Slough, and he refers to these research-based companies as "molecular biology boutiques".

The science that spawned these entrepreneurs began with Crick and Watson's discovery of the structure of DNA, which explained the biochemistry of inheritance.

Then a series of discoveries laid the foundations on which to build a biotechnology industry. These included how to transfer mammalian genes into other organisms, the processes behind recombinant DNA, how to make monoclonal antibodies (Mabs), and how to isolate and analyse the biochemical make-up of individual genes. Transferring or splicing genes into cell cultures became a way of designing biological factories. These synthesised medicinally valuable human protein molecules that, until now, had been inaccessible because of their scarcity and instability.

The first genetically engineered proteins produced for medical use by biotechnology were human insulin and human growth hormone. They were soon followed by erythropoietin, for treating anaemia, and tissue plasminogen activator, a clot-buster for heart disease.

Other families of proteins now available include the molecules classed as cytokines. These are vital, natural substances similar to the interferons, interleukins, colony stimulating factors (CSFs), CD antigens (CD stands for cluster differentiation), and tumour necrosis factors (TNFs) — hot candidates for new anti-cancer drugs.

Although decades of chemical synthesis have produced some astounding drugs, the limitations are reflected in several ways.

Few effective therapies exist for many cancers, viral infections, Alzheimer-type senility and Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, osteoporo-

Dawn of the age of new medicine



The new science has overturned many aspects of development
Dr PETER FELLNER

rosis, atherosclerosis and the vast range of inherited inborn disorders like muscular dystrophy. These are among the targets for the new biopharmaceuticals. But in the early years of the 1980s, the biotechnology companies tended to mimic the thinking of the established pharmaceutical companies, and planned for organisations to span every activity, from discovery to the manufacture and marketing of a licensed medicine.

As one of Britain's biotechnology pathfinders, Celltech, founded in 1980, is one of the mature biopharmaceutical companies on the international stage. Dr Fellner says the embryo industry soon recognised that the new science had overturned many of the commercial and the technical aspects of phar-

maceutical development. Financing these biotechnology companies in the UK has been more than usually difficult for those starting up, compared with the United States.

The British Biotechnology Group, based in Oxford and founded in 1986, has pioneered both revolutionary types of drugs and clever ways of financing.

It battled hard to achieve the first biotech company listing on the London Stock Exchange, and then had a second listing — on the National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotation (Nasdaq) in New York.

An even younger British company, Cambia Pharmaceuticals of Cambridge, was the first to pitch for the more responsive American investors, and opened for an exclusive listing by Nasdaq in 1992.

Cambridge has strong links with academic research groups in Cambridge, and before it sought a listing it had developed a new product — to prevent the rejection of transplanted organs.

As the interest of the big drug companies was kindled in molecular biology developments, they also recognised the gaps in their expertise and that areas of research were still expanding. So, progress is being made on forging alliances between specialist boutiques and the established pharmaceutical companies.

These schemes range from takeovers and joint ventures to patent agreements. Celltech has alliances with Hoffmann-La Roche, an antibody production with Schering Plough on development of an asthma therapy, with Bayer for a treatment for septic shock and other auto-immune diseases; and with Cyanamid on anti-cancer agents.

The leading pharmaceutical players like Glaxo, SmithKline Beecham, Wellcome, Pfizer, Merck, Eli Lilly, Ciba-Geigy, Fisons and Bristol-Myers Squibb have comparable alliances with biotechnology specialists.

However, there are other players in molecular biology research, with discoveries that are ripe for the clinic. The 1980s will be remembered as the decade when groups such as the Imperial Cancer Research Fund (ICRF) and others at universities, discovered how cancers were caused by harmful genes (oncogenes), and the failure of normal genes to control growth.

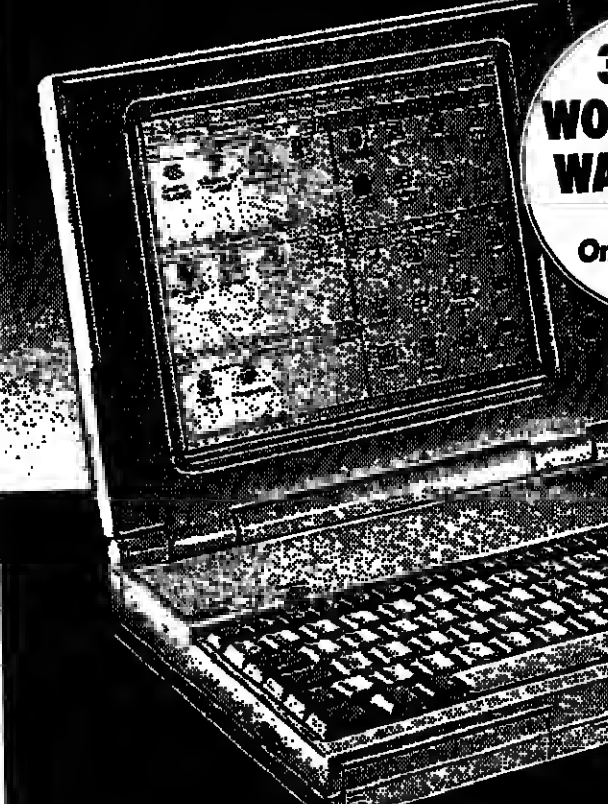
The molecular biologists now know that oncogenes hold the key to the development of more than a score of cancers, including tumours of the breast, bladder, colon and lung. In principle, this discovery opens a completely different approach to fighting a wide range of cancers.

But the promise of better methods of diagnosis and new types of treatment depends on convincing an appropriate commercial patron of their value.

Against this background, the ICRF has created its own applied development laboratory. In effect, it is a technology transfer centre, taking the results from an academic laboratory and refining them to demonstrate more clearly to industrialists their full medical potential.

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...likely to

U-turn by Hollywood studio in last days of battle

QVC likely to sweeten Paramount bid

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON
IN NEW YORK

JVC Network is expected to raise the cash portion of its takeover bid for Paramount Communications this week as he battles the Hollywood studio, which has lasted at least five months, enters its last full week.

QVC, the television shopping channel headed by Barry Diller, was placed under renewed pressure on Friday when Paramount directors did a second about-face, withdrawing their recommendation of its offer and urging shareholders to accept a revised bid from Viacom.

The revised bid from Viacom, the cable television group, this week despite independent estimates that QVC's offer remained higher than Viacom's.

Martin Davis, Paramount's chairman and chief executive, has consistently supported the Viacom proposal since it was first made last September. But earlier this month, he joined the board in a unanimous recommendation of QVC because its bid was higher.

The price difference between the two bids has narrowed, but, according to analysts' calculations, Viacom's offer is worth \$87 per Paramount share, or \$10.3 billion, and Viacom's \$83 per Paramount share, or \$9.8 billion. Paramount shares closed \$1.375 higher on Friday, at \$79.875.

Mr Davis said in a statement: "The board determined, following an analysis from its financial and legal advisers, that the aggregate consideration offered in the Viacom offer, and its second-step merger, taken together, represent the best value available to Paramount stockholders."

Tension between the two camps heightened over the weekend as allegations flew that Paramount advisers had adopted a worst-case valuation of key parts of the QVC cash and shares offer, and valued Viacom's terms optimistically.

Valuation of the two bids is to a considerable extent guesswork, because some components do not yet trade in the open market and the value of others depends on the bidding companies' share prices.

In cash terms, Viacom has the edge. It is offering \$107 a share, for 50.1 per cent of Paramount through a stock market tender offer; that is \$15 a share higher than QVC's current offer of \$92 for 51 per cent. Mr Diller said at the weekend: "The screw turns once again. We will evaluate events and respond appropriately." Two weeks ago, he hinted that he had made his final bid, but Wall Street doubted that he meant it.

Mr Diller's offer seemed likely to give him victory. But at the eleventh hour, Paramount shareholders have been diverted by Viacom's new terms, timed to dissuade arbitrageurs from committing themselves to one side or the other.

Arbitrageurs buy during takeover battles for the profits they can make from the final bids. They have no loyalties and are generally swayed purely by how much money is on the table.

Two of them have come out publicly in favour of Viacom's offer because it gives more cash. If QVC is to convert them, Wall Street says, it will need to raise the cash element of its offer. It may well have to turn to BellSouth, the regional telephone company that has already committed \$1.5 billion to backing QVC's bid and could easily afford more.

But time is running out. Paramount says final bids must be submitted by Tuesday next week.

Managerial rises still twice those of workers

MANAGERS' pay increases are still running at twice the rate of employees' rises — though the gap is closing, according to a new salary survey today. Though both the Government and managers themselves have stressed the need for lower pay settlements, the latest survey of executive pay suggests senior managers are slow to apply their own advice to themselves. The survey, carried out by Sedgwick Noble Lowndes, the employee benefits consultant, shows the average salary increase for executives in the six months to December 31 was 4.6 per cent.

This compares with average pay settlements for all employees, which the consultants say are now running at 2.3 per cent — about half that of the level of managers' increases. The findings of the study suggest, though, that this gap is closing as managers' rises fall back. The 4.6 per cent rise compares with 5 per cent in the first six months of last year and 6.1 per cent a year ago.

VW on road to profit

VOLKSWAGEN, Europe's biggest carmaker, expects its first quarter loss this year to be a "fraction" of the DM1.25 billion lost in the first quarter of 1993, and expects all parts of the group to be in profit for the whole year, except Seat, its Spanish company, Ferdinand Piëch, the VW chairman, said. Elsewhere, General Motors of the US was profitable in 1993 and expects to do better in 1994, Jack Smith, new GM president, said on BBC's *Money Programme* yesterday.

Fiat urged to sell Alfa

FIAT, Italy's leading carmaker, has been called on by Mario Formentini, the mayor of Milan, to sell Alfa Romeo, its high-performance car offshoot, to a Japanese or another non-Italian company rather than risk running the famous marque into the ground. The mayor's proposal comes as the loss making Fiat struggles with strikes and protest marches, triggered by the breakdown of talks last week concerning plans to lay off 11,800 workers over the next two years.

China seeks more gold

A NEW gold study, commissioned by the World Gold Council and released today, forecasts that in the next two years China — which in 1992 was said to have been a big gold buyer from Western central banks — will want to buy even more for its reserves. *The Changing Relationship between Gold and the Money Supply*, by US economists Michael Bordo and Anna Schwartz, adds there could be more central bank buying of gold by Taiwan, India and the Philippines.

Dairy Crest milk float

A KEY meeting takes place today between the Milk Marketing Board and Whitehall officials which should put the flotation of Dairy Crest, the milk products arm of the MMB, on the fast-track. The MMB will tell Ministry of Agriculture officials that it has settled differences with the Dairy Trade Federation about how the MMB should be wound up to usher in a deregulated market in milk sales. Dairy Crest's flotation had been delayed by the dispute.

Trustees of MGN fund to sue for £200m

BY PATRICIA TEHAN
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE trustees of Mirror Group Newspapers pension fund will tomorrow begin their claim for damages of £200 million from three City firms which had dealings with businesses run by Robert Maxwell, the late media tycoon.

Investco MIM and Capel-Care Myers, the UK fund managers, and Lehman Brothers, the US investment bank, are fighting the claim.

The trustees had increased their claim from £36 million to £200 million last year, amending a "whistle-blowers" clause in their writs. This alleges that the three institutions should have been aware of Mr Maxwell's activities, when dealing with businesses run by him while he was plundering his companies' pension funds.

A £200 million claim has been lodged against each of the firms, but these will be offset against each other, so the total claim against the three is unlikely to be higher than £200 million. But the trustees say the total funds missing amount to £250 million, so write against other banks are likely over the next month or two. The case will be heard against Investco first, then CCM, then Lehman.

A spokeswoman for Lehman Brothers said: "We believe we have a very strong defence and we are planning to go to court."



Maxwell: plundered funds

Lonrho set to double its money

IN A relatively quiet week for company results, Lonrho, the industrial conglomerate headed by Tiny Rowland and Dieter Bock, the joint chief executives, is set to dominate the scene when it reports tomorrow.

Brokers expect Lonrho to report a doubling of underlying annual profits. Pre-tax profit forecasts for the year to September 30, including disposal gains, range from £140 million to £170 million, on an FR53 basis, against a restated £114 million last time. Profits from continuing businesses are forecast to be between £80 million and £95 million, up from a restated £39 million at 1992's low ebb.

Alan Richards, at Barclays de Zoete Wedd, says attention is likely to focus on continuing operations "and on what Mr Bock says are the core activities of mining, hotels, agriculture and trading."

A board split between Mr Rowland, Lonrho's founder, and Mr Bock, the new chairman, recently came into the open. The German businessman holds 18.8 per cent of Lonrho, and an option on Mr Rowland's 6 per cent stake. Lonrho has shed businesses, cut debt, ended a long-running dispute with the Fayed, the owners of Harrods, and appointed outside directors.

Most brokers expect an unchanged full-year dividend of 4p, though Credit Lyonnais Laing thinks Lonrho may just lift it to 5p. Michael Coulson, an analyst at the firm, said: "We know it has made progress. With the prospect of further reductions in the debt, an increase in earnings and Bock having such a large stake, we think a dividend rise may be a good signal."

Overall figures will include profits on the sale of The Observer newspaper, Lonrho's Volksware, importer and its venture with Germany's Krupp, plus a £12 million provision against Hondo oil in the US. Trading is thought to have been dull in the UK and Africa, but precious metal prices have levelled out. Further signs of upturn. Further news is also expected this quarter of Ghana's planned \$1 billion flotation of its Ashanti gold mine, in which Lonrho holds a 45 per cent stake.



Tiny Rowland and Dieter Bock: not only wrestling with Lonrho's problems

Analysts say that gold volumes and profits improved at Ashanti. Savings from rationalisation at its other price asset, South Africa's Western Platinum mine, will also flow through.

TODAY

A sharp reduction in interest charges and further progress at the Early Learning Centres is expected to boost first-half profits at John Menzies. James Capel has pencilled in pre-tax profits of £5.5 million (£5.8 million). The interim dividend should be raised to 4.1p (£8.8p). The Early Learning Centres should have performed well, though trading in the other retailing businesses may have been patchy.

Interim results from WH Smith Group, the retail and distribution group, are expected to show a relatively healthy advance, although Do It All, the group's all-day-it-yourself joint venture with Boots, will again cloud the picture.

TOMORROW

Interim results from the Early Learning Centres should have performed well, though trading in the other retailing businesses may have been patchy. Interim results from WH Smith Group, the retail and distribution group, are expected to show a relatively healthy advance, although Do It All, the group's all-day-it-yourself joint venture with Boots, will again cloud the picture.

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WEDNESDAY

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dicted. NatWest expects retail profits to rise 13.2 per cent and an improvement at Our Price, while it is forecast to trim losses to about £7 million (£7.4 million).

Analysts also await news on whether moves to dismantle the group's two-tier share structure, which gives holders of B shares — 10 per cent of the equity — 36 per cent of the votes, will coincide with the retirement this month of Sir Simon Hornby as chairman. Sir Simon disclosed at the annual meeting that the board had considered such a move and that it remained under consideration.

Interim results from WH Smith Group, the retail and distribution group, are expected to show a relatively healthy advance, although Do It All, the group's all-day-it-yourself joint venture with Boots, will again cloud the picture.

THURSDAY

MFI is expected to turn in first-half pre-tax profits of £21 million (£14.5 million), according to UBS, but the City will be more interested to hear how trading is going during the vital January sale. Analysts are expecting better news on sales and profit margins. Market forecasts range from £19 million to £25.5 million. An improved interim dividend of 1.3p (£2.5p) is predicted.

Unilever, the electronic components group, is forecast to report a rise in first-half pre-tax profits to £7 million (£4.5 million), according to NatWest Securities. The interim is pencilled in at 2.2p (£1.1p).

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FRIDAY

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CHANGE ON WEEK

THE POUND

US dollar 1.4948 (+0.0033)
German mark 2.6117 (+0.0001)
Exchange index 82.6 (0.1)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKETS

FT 30 share 2668.5 (+56.2)
FT-SE 100 3484.2 (+83.6)
New York Dow Jones 3914.48 (+47.28)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 19307.43 (+333.73)

PHILIP PANGALOS

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.27	2.07
Austria Sch	19.77	17.71
Belgium Fr	57.26	52.86
Canada \$	2.076	1.916
Cyprus Cyp£	0.810	0.780
Denmark Kr	10.71	9.91
Finland Mk	9.28	8.58
France Fr	2.75	2.54
Germany Dm	395.00	370.00
Greece Dr	12.21	11.21
Hong Kong \$	2634.00	2479.00
Italy Lira	180.50	168.50
Japan Yen	0.630	0.576
Malta	3.056	2.825
Netherlands Gld	273.50	255.00
Norway Kr	5.85	4.95
Portugal Esc	220.50	206.50
Spain Ptas	12.63	11.83
Sweden Kr	24290.00	22760.00
Switzerland	1.595	1.465
Turkey Lira		
USA \$		

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading Friday.

LA CREME DE LA CREME

PA/SECRETARY TO DIRECTOR

Due to maternity leave, the above position has become vacant on a temporary basis. Initially this is a three month contract and renewable to a permanent basis. The position may become permanent.

The role involves working primarily for two Directors and will include general secretarial duties as well as arranging for the Director's travel and accommodation. You will be responsible for the day to day running of the Director's office. The ideal candidate will possess a minimum of 10 years' experience of working for a Director in a similar capacity. Please send your CV to:

Jenny Ayres
Personnel Manager
Euro Brokers Ltd
135 Houndsditch
LONDON EC3A 7AJ.

SURVEYS ADMINISTRATOR

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS EC4

£15,000 + BENS
Leading management consultancy seeks a surveys administrator (20-30 yrs) for their financial services consulting division. Candidates will be responsible for the administration of financial surveys, liaising with clients and ensuring the smooth running of the survey process. You will be required to have a minimum of 10 years' experience of working in a similar capacity. Please send your CV to:

John Smith
Personnel Manager
100 Cannon Street
LONDON EC4A 3DF

PA TO MD

Young, well-established, fast expanding, multi-national marketing business requires PA to Managing Director. Age 25+ with excellent communication skills. Languages, including French, an advantage. Salary according to experience. Please apply in writing to: Mrs Kerry Hawkins
Personnel Manager
100 Cannon Street
LONDON EC4A 3DF

SUMMER JOBS IN AMERICA

American children's summer camps need cheerful, responsible young people (18-25) with solid academic records to work in the USA. You will be responsible for the day to day running of the camp. The ideal candidate will possess a minimum of 10 years' experience of working in a similar capacity. Please send your CV to:

John Smith
Personnel Manager
100 Cannon Street
LONDON EC4A 3DF

ART GALLERY MANAGER

Required for established West End Contemporary Art Gallery. Successful candidate will be responsible for the day to day running of the gallery. The ideal candidate will possess a minimum of 10 years' experience of working in a similar capacity. Please send your CV to:

John Smith
Personnel Manager
100 Cannon Street
LONDON EC4A 3DF

PA/SECRETARY

Successful PA/Secretary required for a leading financial services company. The ideal candidate will possess a minimum of 10 years' experience of working in a similar capacity. Please send your CV to:

John Smith
Personnel Manager
100 Cannon Street
LONDON EC4A 3DF

PA/SECRETARY

Chief executive of small new business requires a PA/Secretary. Located in the City, Spanish speaking, excellent professional and personal qualities needed. Audio and Word for Windows. PC skills. Age 25 to 45. Start from February. Salary £18,000 plus benefits. Please send your CV to:

John Smith
Personnel Manager
100 Cannon Street
LONDON EC4A 3DF

CONVEYANCING SECRETARY

£17,000 + BEN. Medium-sized Law firm urgently requires Legal PA to work on a 1-1 basis for dynamic boss. Min 1 year exp. Wordperfect 5.1 prof. Tel: 071-831-9830
Greyhound Rise Court.

BANKING & LEGAL LA CREME

LEGAL PA

Independent TV production company based in Central London requires Legal PA with minimum of 3-4 years applicable experience for its legal and business affairs. Good CV with details of previous salary by fax to: 071-831-9830
11th February 1994.

COLLEGE TO CAREER

Successful career with a secure future. Excellent opportunity for a young person with a degree in a relevant subject. Please send your CV to:

John Smith
Personnel Manager
100 Cannon Street
LONDON EC4A 3DF

PUBLIC CREME

Enfield and Haringey

PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO GENERAL MANAGER

Salary: up to £17,291 p.a. plus £1,161 p.a. London Weighting
A vacancy has arisen for a full-time Personal Assistant to the General Manager. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day to day running of the office. The ideal candidate will possess a minimum of 10 years' experience of working in a similar capacity. Please send your CV to:

John Smith
Personnel Manager
100 Cannon Street
LONDON EC4A 3DF

MULTI-LINGUAL OPPORTUNITIES

PA/Secretary to Director. Due to maternity leave, the above position has become vacant on a temporary basis. Initially this is a three month contract and renewable to a permanent basis. The position may become permanent.

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Personnel Manager
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LONDON EC4A 3DF

NON-SECRETARIAL

GREY & THE RHINE ISLANDS

Specialist tour operator requires overseas representatives for the Summer 1994 season. Previous experience and a knowledge of French would be an advantage. It is unlikely that candidates under the age of 25 would be suitable. Please send your CV to:

John Smith
Personnel Manager
100 Cannon Street
LONDON EC4A 3DF

PART TIME VACANCIES

PA/Secretary to Director. Due to maternity leave, the above position has become vacant on a temporary basis. Initially this is a three month contract and renewable to a permanent basis. The position may become permanent.

P-T COURSE ADMINISTRATOR

RECEPTION SELECTION

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Italy's undaunted 'engineer' designs great leap forward

Despite slump, political crisis and legal problems, Carlo De Benedetti professes optimism both for Italy and for Olivetti, says Colin Narbrough

Sweeping political change in Italy, deep recession and a suspended jail sentence for fraud have failed to dent the natural optimism of Carlo De Benedetti. He may soon be back on the acquisition trail and heading a European equivalent of America's "information superhighway" plan for continent-wide advanced computer and telephone networks.

One of the best-known Italian businessmen outside Italy, after his marauding forays into other European markets in the 1980s, Signor De Benedetti, known as *l'ingegnere* (the engineer) to his staff, appeared confident when interviewed by *The Times* in Milan that he would return Olivetti, his loss-making personal computer group, to the black this year, whatever storms blow around him.

Despite his reputation for being a maverick among Italy's business elite, which he evidently savours, his difficulties are very much those that beset the whole of Italian industry and commerce. Recession caught most leading industrial economies. Italy, however, has at the same time seen its corrupt political order collapse, with an accompanying assault on big business for the covert help it gave to politicians and the bribes it paid for government contracts. Signor De Benedetti likened Italian industry's situation to a man wading across the swollen river of recession, only to find that it starts to rain when he reaches the middle.

Yet Signor De Benedetti sees the "peaceful revolution" in Italy as an opportunity, rather than a development that will leave Italian companies handicapped by the stigma of corruption and economic malaise. "I don't believe I'm a handicapped person," he said. In fact, he regards the current changes in Italy, with an election due next month, as a liberation from a political regime that was bad for his country. He said he was "extremely optimistic" about Italy's future.

Olivetti, Europe's leading personal computer company, like its rivals, has suffered badly from the combination of recession and severe price deflation. Group sales grew at a healthy annual rate of 8.9 per cent in the second half of 1993, but Signor De Benedetti still expects big losses, albeit smaller than the 650 billion lire (£255 million) net loss in 1992. NatWest Securities also sees this year as pivotal, with the prospect of a 245 billion lire net profit next year.

Signor De Benedetti attributes most of Olivetti's recent losses to restructuring. Having pared the workforce by 12 per cent, to 35,000, last year, the third successive year of double-digit cuts, he intends to whittle it down to 33,000 by June. But Olivetti's shrinking workforce contrasts with its rising sales and growing market share. "We have been laying people off, not the business," Signor De Benedetti stressed.

He detects a slowdown in the decline in personal computer prices, having underestimated the pace of deflation in recent years. Olivetti had budgeted for annual price falls of 25 per cent, only to see them slumping by 40 per cent. But the information technology industry is embroiled in a fierce price war and even the improved environment Signor De Benedetti expects this year will see prices tumbling by 20 per cent. As he rightly notes, no other industry has



Carlo De Benedetti is confident Olivetti will be back in profit this year

witnessed such a price collapse. Another source of his confidence about a comeback by Olivetti, the third-biggest player in the European market behind America's Compaq and IBM, is the fact that the company successfully raised its capital by the equivalent of \$600 million last summer and has seen its share price outperform the market, rising 55 per cent from the low-point last June to an 18-month high this month. At an extraordinary shareholders' meeting in March, the company intends to seek authorisation for a further capital increase. The golden scenario for Olivetti, or "great leap", as Signor De Benedetti prefers to call it, would be for the company to secure the second Italian telecommunications licence. That would give it credibility in the world telecommunications industry. Omnitel, the Olivetti-led consortium bidding for the second digital mobile phone network, has a main competitor in Unifon, comprising Fiat, the carmaker, and Fininvest, controlled by the Berlusconi group. If awarded the cellular licence, Omnitel is committed to investing 750 billion lire in year one, half of the total investment of 1.5 trillion

lire. Olivetti holds a 51 per cent stake in the consortium, the other members of which include Bell Atlantic and Sweden's Telia. The new licence would represent an important part privatisation programme, which started in earnest last month with the sale of Credito Italiano, the state bank, is expected to continue, irrespective of the colour of the government that emerges from the general election.

De Benedetti has been asked to help chart a European telecoms strategy

been invited by Martin Bangemann, the EC's industry commissioner, to take a leading part in charting a telecommunications superhighway strategy for Europe. Al Gore, America's vice-president, unveiled the Clinton administration's plans for advanced networks spanning America this month.

The legal clouds still hanging over Signor De Benedetti have yet to clear, but his advisers were clearly encouraged by a civil court decision in

November to dismiss a 30 billion lire damages claim against him by the creditors of Banco Ambrosiano. Almost two years ago, he was sentenced to more than six years in jail for fraudulent bankruptcy during his stewardship of the bank, which collapsed in 1982. Roberto Calvi, the Ambrosiano chairman known as "God's Banker", was found hanged below London's Blackfriars Bridge the same year.

Signor De Benedetti has been unable to appeal so far because the court has not released details of the charges. It is widely thought that the case will be dropped. That would be highly welcome to Signor De Benedetti. He has been less concerned about bribes paid by Olivetti to win a post office contract, for all the public humiliation of being hauled off to a Rome prison briefly last October. He admitted the payment and has assisted the authorities, unlike many of his rivals caught up in the web of kickback scandals.

At 59, Signor De Benedetti shows no signs of retiring, or swapping business for politics. He has three sons, and Rodolfo, the eldest, is the managing director of CIR, the De Benedetti holding company. For all his love of family, it seems that he is in no hurry to hand over the reins, and even thinks it unwise to do so. If his children fail to display sufficient entrepreneurial flair,

Dynastic control of much of Italian industry is, oddly enough, something he is opposed to. He sees it as reflecting a poorly working market and political system. He has long advocated the development of the Milan stock exchange, a dwarf in comparison with the size of the underlying economy. Pointing to America as the example of a developed market place, he said: "Today, the family companies are finished."

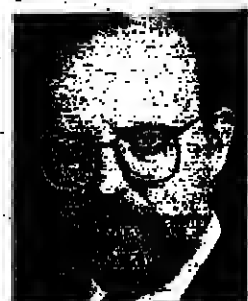
An ardent admirer of China, for developing its economy before rushing into democracy, Signor De Benedetti is about to visit the Middle Kingdom in search of business opportunities. In terms of local purchasing power, China was already the world's third-biggest market and would soon be number one, he said. But he dismisses the idea of importing Chinese conditions in such areas as prices and wages to Europe. "We [Europeans] have to go into businesses where we can add new value," he says. "You leverage on your intelligence."

Britain's encouragement of inward investment by Japanese companies in its car industry is, in Signor De Benedetti's view, a model of pragmatism appropriate to the fast-changing world of manufacturing. "There is no space left for the ideological any more."

In the 1980s, Signor De Benedetti sought to pre-empt the creation of a single European market by launching an aggressive campaign of takeovers that brought him close to securing control of Société Générale, Belgium's biggest company. He is remembered in the business world for that spectacular failure, but would like to be known better for his 45 per cent stake in Volvo, the French car components group that has successfully challenged Europe's best component makers.

Disposal of Triumph-Adler, Olivetti's German subsidiary, is in the offing, but Signor De Benedetti could be gearing for a fresh takeover campaign. In recent discussions with Edouard Balladur, the French prime minister, he put forward the idea of Olivetti taking up part of Groupe Bull, its state-owned French rival, which seems likely to have its latest request for massive subsidies turned down by the European Commission. Could it be that we are about to witness the re-emergence of Signor De Benedetti in his former role as Europe's super-predator?

Bloody battle of the high streets won't be over by Christmas



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

January sales are raggedly reaching their end. What will succeed them? The strongest candidate is February sales. Retailers might attempt another return to "normal" prices for a few weeks to see if consumers have finally shrugged off their recession habits. That did not work last year, but you never know. Alternatively, there could be a more general rethink, to year-round special offers, as favoured by Dixons and the former Rainers; to more but narrower ranges to raise the volume of sales per square foot or even, dare one dream, to permanently lower prices.

If "consumer sovereignty" proves to be more than a fashionable slogan, it will surely reverse the trend to stores patronising customers by charging high prices for those who cannot delay purchases and then graciously permitting us to queue for the crowded "sales" on which old-fashioned stores have come to rely ever more.

These are head-scratching times for retailers. Two dreams faded last week. The first was Tesco's vision of ever-expanding horizons for superstores. For some time, industry watchers such as Verdict Research have argued that superstores were nearing saturation coverage. Yet Tesco and Sainsbury launched vast share issues three years ago, enticing eager investors to sustain their headline expansion. Now Tesco, following Argyl's Safeway group, has finally admitted the obvious, cutting spending on new stores by a third and making a huge change against profits. Sainsbury's response is awaited.

The very next day, Kingfisher, the B&Q, Woolworth and Comet group, reported disappointing sales for the peak season of the year, and forecast lower profits. It was not the first. Dixons had already revealed the depredations of price-cutting in the video-game and other electronics markets, partly initiated by Kingfisher. As with Tesco, however, Kingfisher's troubles carry a special significance. If Tesco was the most voracious champion of ever-expanding selling space, Kingfisher was the new standard-bearer of realism for an era of lower growth. Customers demand permanently lower prices, came its incessant message. Strong retailers must therefore cut gross selling margins to raise the volume of their sales and rely on cost-cutting and improved efficiency to maintain their net profit margins. This philosophy, long known to, say, Marks and Spencer, has

become instant orthodoxy. For Kingfisher, however, it has not entirely worked as planned, at least not yet. Sales rose on average only 4 per cent and gains were concentrated at B&Q, the DIY chain that is the group's only dominant market leader. Operating margins fell.

If lower prices are not matched by significantly higher volume, retailers are in trouble. That is why they dread the price war. If everyone joins in, everyone loses out to the weakest are forced to the wall or absorbed by the strong. When Tesco launched such a war from a position of relative strength, seventeen years ago, that was what eventually happened. This time, there is no declared price war. The big supermarkets were forced to respond, successfully, to newcomers seeking to fill the discount gap in the market. But the

If lower margins are not matched by higher sales, retailers are in trouble.

main impetus has been sheer consumer resistance during the recession. Many big groups were relying ever more on new openings because growth was falling off at existing stores. This in turn eventually changed the economics of new stores.

Put these two together and the days of reliable 20 per cent profit growth look over, at least for a while. That was never some inevitable natural state of affairs. Twenty years ago, the industry had a much lower image. Big department stores, such as Debenhams, were long-standing problem companies, as department stores have since been in Germany and America. Even the food sector had more shoddy stars than new suns.

If retailing is to enter a permanently harsher climate, then market leadership becomes ever more important.

as Kingfisher is discovering. The leaders can cut costs easier and set prices. The rest have to run hard to stand still. The leaders can also establish own brands better, developing the second main route to greater efficiency through more intimate co-ordination with suppliers.

Developing a house brand that customers trust, both for quality and value, was the key to the M&S story, has helped John Lewis in department stores. Boots in cosmetics and toiletries, and is the chief strength of Sainsbury, with Tesco and Argyl puffing to catch up. Quality own brands were also the secret to high, and in supermarkets ever-widening, net margins. They are now the focus of price cutting, outside the discount sector, putting yet more strain on the also-rans — and potentially on rival high street barons. Food retailers that went into high margin toiletries to escape from the last big food price war, for instance, might cut prices to challenge Boots.

There are new complications in this round of price pressure in and out of the high street. One is the move to lower inflation. In retailing, as in business generally, this has reduced firms' flexibility. As price-capped utilities are beginning to discover, it is much harder to sustain permanent cost-cutting in real terms in inflation is low. Investing to replace inflation-linked labour costs, for instance, has a weaker rolling impact. Waiting for the weak to fail can also be more frustrating. While several menswear and electrical chains have fallen in recession, some groups that over-reached themselves early in the downturn, such as Next, Storehouse, Asda, and possibly even Gateway, have got their act together under new management.

This time, the secret weapon might be Sunday trading. In supermarkets, the drive to open on Sunday was spurred by weakness, the need to revive volume growth through existing stores at the expense of local competitors. It also raises running costs, making it much harder for weaker competitors to sustain or rebuild low margins. Yet the impact on total retail sales is likely to be small. If deregulation arrives, as seems likely, when competition is at its fiercest, then Sunday trading will surely become the norm much faster than if the law had changed five years ago. For all but the strongest, the retail battleground will become even more bloody.

Can the Chancellor be trusted on inflation?

Interest rate expectations became more realistic last week, on the back of economic data showing a pleasant mix of subdued inflation coupled with steady but not excessive growth in economic activity. The latter, in particular, helped to calm fears arising since Christmas that the economy may be growing too fast to allow either inflation or interest rates to fall further.

With gilt yields at close to 30-year lows, a key question for gilt market investors is whether the authorities can be trusted to maintain underlying inflation within the Government's 1-4 per cent target range, not just over the next few months but over the next several years. Moreover, even if the Government's intentions are honourable, there is the additional question of whether it has the ability to deliver what it promises on inflation.

To take a recent example, every quarter, the Bank of England publishes projections in its *Inflation Report* for the path of underlying retail price inflation over the next three months. In the November report, the Bank forecast that underlying inflation would hover at about 3.3 per cent in the final quarter of 1993. We now know that inflation actually averaged 2.7 per cent over this period.

The importance of this is clear. If the authorities can be so wrong about inflation over the next three months, what confidence can investors have in their ability to set policy which, in the Government's words, is "based on assessment of the prospects for

underlying inflation in one or two years' time?"

This is a legitimate concern for investors. With GDP growing at an annualised rate of about 3 per cent and with the exchange rate having strengthened by about 1 per cent since the Budget, the authorities may soon need to weigh up the case for cutting interest rates to offset the impact of a stronger exchange rate against the risk that this might reignite the all-too-familiar boom-bust cycle in the UK.

If inflation were the only consideration, the answer is clear enough — leave interest rates unchanged. But inflation

A stronger exchange rate could undermine the recovery

is not the only concern. A stronger exchange rate could undermine the recovery, especially with tax increases about to bite, and sow the seeds of future problems with the current account of the balance of payments. Weaker growth would also undermine efforts to reduce the PSBR.

Nor is a stronger exchange rate needed to control inflation. According to the inflation model used at Goldman Sachs, if the exchange rate were back at the level prevailing at the time of the Budget, the economy could enjoy a prolonged period of 3 per cent a year GDP growth while leaving underlying inflation

broadly in the centre of the Government's target range. A 5 per cent appreciation of the exchange rate could actually push inflation to the bottom of the target range during 1995.

With the Bank of England likely to adopt an upbeat line on inflation prospects in the February *Inflation Report*, the chances of lower base rates in the coming months remain high. Only in the unlikely event that economic growth accelerates to more than a 3 per cent rate in the face of tax increases would prospects for lower base rates be jeopardised.

In such a benign inflation environment the outlook for gilts remains favourable for at least the next few months. Real gilt yields still seem high, both for this stage of the cycle and compared with international markets, and they should be able to drop gradually as confidence in a sustained period of low inflation increases.

Gilts will also be helped by the likelihood of a favourable trend in most other major bond markets over the next few months, especially in Europe. Many European countries are entering their fifth year of below trend growth, which will help to maintain a downwards trend for inflation and interest rates for some considerable time. This augurs well for European bond markets generally during 1994.

For the next few months, gilts are likely to perform fully.

DAVID WALTON
Goldman Sachs
International Limited

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Tax shelter in a sunny spot

THE sun shines, the natives are friendly... and the telephones work. Welcome to Malta, long-associated with snoozing fishermen, and hoping to become the Jersey of the eastern Mediterranean.

In the five years since the rejection of the old socialist government, a small fortune has been spent transforming Malta from dowdy old maid into attractive hostess. Now, she is ready to welcome fund managers and banks to what is hailed as the world's newest offshore financial centre.

Say "tax haven" and many think of brass plates on doors, money laundering, and concrete boots for those too nosy. Not Malta. Eager for reputable clients, Maltese have spent much time studying havens from Luxembourg to the Cayman Islands. A "brass-plate-and-no-questions" approach will not do here.

"We want to grow into a financial centre of repute," said John Dalli, minister of finance, in London to brief City institutions. "Malta is a small economy. Financial services is one of the main growth areas." But does the world need



Malta: telling City folk of its hope of being a tax haven

another tax haven? It seems so. Many established centres are bursting, and charge high prices for newcomers trying to squeeze in. Malta offers lower prices, a tough rule book and modern infrastructure. And no scandals...

Banker of note(s)

OPERA in the garden is the kick of Leonard Ingram, merchant banker brother of Richard of Private Eye fame, who is on Robert Fleming's main board and has made Garsington Manor, Oxfordshire, a mini-Glyndebourne. Such is

his success in finding lost operas that this festival, from June 17, has grown to 20 performances, including Richard Strauss's *Capriccio*, Rossini's *Barber of Seville* and this year's Haydn rarity, *L'incontro Improvviso*. There is a long interval, when dinner may be taken in the Great Barn, Ingram's now in India, has done much work for the Saudi government, who dubbed him "the greatest of all advisers".

Woolies wonders

TRUST Kingfisher, the Woolworths to Comet retail group

headed by Sir Geoffrey Mulhally, to stay a step ahead of the field. It has given £20,000 towards a two-year project researching employers' attitudes to gay employees — and vice versa, for that matter. The study is led by Stonewall, a gay rights action group. Kingfisher, with 65,000 employees and a progressive record on promoting women in management and on Sunday trading, will be as interested as anyone in the findings.

A home win

THE in-house 1993 Share of the Year Competition at Charles Stanley, the private client stockbroker, was jointly won by two employees who picked Oceana Consolidated, which rose 489 per cent in the year. Nothing surprising, until it is noted that Oceana owns Charles Stanley, and the winners were Peter Hurst, finance director, and Roger Cloughly, head of settlements.

On-line lawmen

GET a nervous feeling when drawing money from an auto-teller at night? Someone creeping up to snatch those crisp notes? This seems to be the worry in California, where the

Wells Fargo bank is acting to guard against auto-muggings. By pushing a button, anyone using a cash machine will be patched through to police emergency desks. British banks, such as Barclays, are experimenting with cameras at cash dispensers, but have no plans for panic buttons. "Thankfully, that level of crime is extremely rare in Britain," a spokesman says.

Bed and not bored

SO MUCH for a relaxing stay. The Hyatt hotel group has launched a service to satisfy even the most manic business traveller. Rooms available under its Business Plan Programme are kitted out with fax machines, desks, enhanced lighting, telephones with computer hook-ups, coffee machines, iron and ironing boards and a hairdryer. For real head-cases, there is 24-hour access to office supplies. "Our guests say they need services that would allow them to be as productive on the road as in the office," says Darryl Hartley-Leonard, Hyatt president. Throw in a secretary and a washing-machine, and they'd be away.

JON ASHWORTH

BUSINESS

MONDAY JANUARY 24 1994

PARAMOUNT FIGHT 37

DILLER SET TO
RAISE STAKES AT
THE ELEVENTH HOUR

BUSINESS EDITOR ROBERT BALLANTYNE

Power generators meet Offer to head off MMC enquiry

By MARTIN WALLER
DEPUTY CITY EDITOR

THE men running the two biggest power generators in England and Wales will go before the Office of Electricity Regulation (Ofer) this week in a last bid to halt a reference of their businesses to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

If they fail, an MMC enquiry would have to decide whether National Power and the smaller PowerGen are exploiting their share of more than half that market, an outcome the regulator, the generators and their big industrial customers are all keen to avoid.

But despite some optimism in the City, which has driven their shares higher in recent weeks, and on the part of industry sources themselves at the weekend, the

situation is thought to be too close to call. One analyst privately offered odds of five to one against a monopolies reference, although a few others are more sceptical. The companies themselves have in the past indicated they believe they can reach the necessary accommodation with Professor Stephen Littlechild at Ofer.

Even the Major Energy Users' Council, which has long campaigned against what it claims are too high energy prices, has said it would prefer a proper negotiated settlement on the price of electricity in the "pool," the open market for power.

Offer insisted last week the various parties were still talking, but an initial mid-January deadline has been missed, and while Offer sources were hopeful agreement could be reached by the end of this week, this is by no means certain.

□ The power producers are struggling to avert a possible probe and eventual break-up of their industry that all the parties involved say can be avoided, but the time to reach a deal with the industry regulator is running out

Professor Littlechild will come under increasing pressure to reach a deal with the generators. But he is thought to be insisting he be granted undertakings over prices and other matters in return. A straight decision to keep the structure of the industry intact, some observers believe, would look too much like a climb-down and would have to be balanced by concessions from the power producers. The generators themselves are keen that the issue be resolved, rather than be

left to hang over the industry. In this they find common cause with the Government. Both parties would want the earliest possible sale of the Government's 40 per cent of the two companies, retained when they were privatised in March 1991.

For the Government, the sale would bring in a much-needed boost of £4 billion to the public exchequer at current market prices. A sell-off had been expected some time this summer, although sources now indicate the Treasury may be blowing

cold again. Directors of the generators, while prepared privately to accept the need for some undertakings, are in return expecting some form of reassurance from the regulator that he will not reconsider a monopoly reference in due course, not least because the sale of the government stakes would require a prospectus that they would themselves have to sign off giving some guarantees of their companies' future financial health. The precise wording of that is one of the three remaining matters thought to be in dispute.

The other two relate to the actual undertakings that are being asked of the generators. One would be over the price at which power is supplied to the big users, the other over the sale of power stations to allow other parties into the market. Both raise difficult questions for

the directors over how much shareholder value they can negotiate away.

National Power now operates a third of the generating capacity in England and Wales and PowerGen a quarter. Those market shares have been decreasing rapidly as nuclear power has increased its share while independent producers have also moved in. National Power on privatisation had more than half, while PowerGen in a recent speech to the industry said its share would drop further to 22 per cent over the next five years.

While those figures apparently confirm the generators' stance that power production, once a virtual duopoly, is increasingly open to the forces of competition, they have further work to do to persuade Professor Littlechild that the process is continuing quickly enough.

Chairman and three co-directors prepare to bow out

Lonrho set for board reshuffle

By MELVYN MARCUS, CITY EDITOR

SPECULATION is mounting that Lonrho, the international trading conglomerate led by Tiny Rowland and Dieter Bock, will reveal a major boardroom reshuffle when it discloses its 1992-93 results tomorrow.

Word had it last month that four of Lonrho's directors, including chairman Rene Leclezio, are expected to retire during the current year although Lonrho refrained from clarifying the situation.

Mr Bock, Lonrho's largest shareholder with an 18.8 per cent stake, is understood to have pressed for an alteration in the company's articles which would herald the introduction of a compulsory retirement age of 65.

Mr Rowland, in turn, is understood to have made much of the fact that any change in Lonrho's articles requires a 75 per cent majority vote, while any resignation requires a unanimous board vote. In the event, Mr Rowland is understood to have insisted last month that any resignation would only be accepted at the "behest" of a director.

Mr Leclezio, who succeeded Sir Edward Du Cann as chairman, and co-director Sir Peter Youens, are both in their 70s

and are thus expected to bow out later this year, along with co-deputy chairman Robert Dunlop and Paul Spicer, both in their mid-sixties.

All the same, departures from Lonrho's Cheapside HQ are not necessarily imminent, with the reorganisation expected to stretch well into the 1993-94 financial year to end-September.

Mr Leclezio may conceivably choose to preside over Lonrho's agm, scheduled for March but, whatever the timing of his retirement, Lonrho's board will clearly have to appoint a new chairman. An outside appointment cannot be ruled out but, in view of the appointment of Peter Harper, Stephen Walls and Sir John Leahy as non-executive directors last October, Mr Rowland and Mr Bock may well favour an in-house solution.

Mr Bock and Mr Rowland have played out a corporate power struggle for the best part of a year but, against this background, Lonrho's share price has more than doubled from a 1993-94 low of 70p to 146p. Tomorrow's results are expected to show a significant profit recovery from 1991-92's depressed levels.

Reporting this week, page 37



Lonrho team: Rene Leclezio, top, Sir Peter Youens, left, Paul Spicer and Robert Dunlop

Independent waits on MGN rescue bid

By OUR CITY EDITOR

PROPOSALS for a rescue takeover bid, mounted by a consortium created around Mirror Group Newspapers, are expected to be put to the board of Newspaper Publishing, proprietor of The Independent, today.

Major European shareholders in Newspaper Publishing, La Repubblica and El Pais, each with an 18.6 per cent stake, are understood to favour a deal with MGN, other parties in the bidding consortium being Andreas Whitam Smith, founder editor of The Independent, and co-directors Adrian O'Neill and Matthew Synnott.

Mr Whitam Smith, who has held discussions with various interested parties in recent weeks, is expected to present Newspaper Publish-

ing's board, led by Ian Hay Davison, with details today, but swift agreement is by no means assured.

Mr Davison, along with chief executive Patrick Morrissey and Sir Kit McMahon, a non-executive director, are intent on achieving the best price for the company's institutional shareholders.

Mr Davison and his colleagues are understood to take the view that Newspaper Publishing, with an annual revenue of £80 million, is worth a minimum of £60 million; the equivalent of £3 per share. Speculation has it, however, that David Montgomery, chief executive of MGN, favours terms of between £2 and £2.50.

Particularly in view of the ongoing scale of capital investment, if the rescue bid is

successful, the Italian and Spanish publishers will emerge with a share of 50 per cent of Newspaper Publishing, and MGN with a maximum of 40 per cent, the remainder going to the Whitam Smith camp.

Such developments may well prompt counter proposals from other interested parties, the favourite being Tony O'Reilly, chairman of the Dublin-based Independent Newspapers.

Mr O'Reilly has expressed interest in acquiring a stake of 25-30 per cent and is believed to be seeking a potential partner. Lord Hollick, chairman of MGN, which recently launched a £290 million takeover bid for Anglia TV, is perceived as a possible candidate.

Northwest passage to \$500m

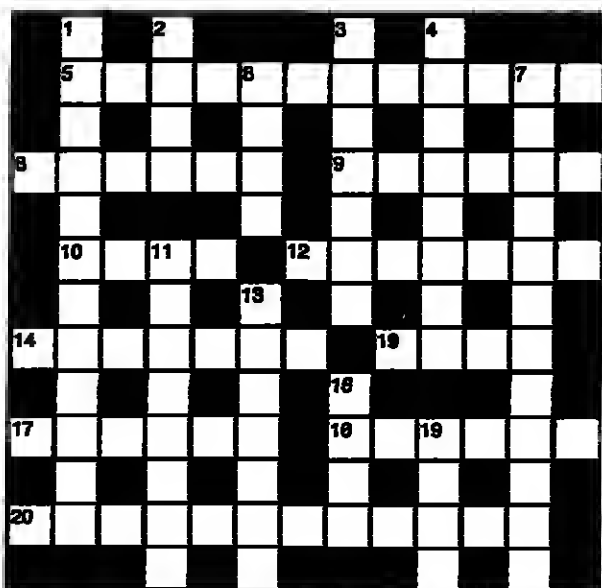
FROM PHILIP ROBINSON IN NEW YORK

TWO American businessmen are facing one of the biggest windfalls in corporate history. Their joint profit from the refloation of Northwest Airlines could approach half a billion dollars.

Alfred Checchi is poised for a near 25-fold profit of \$242 million from the money put into his latest venture, started four years ago. Mr Checchi, a former Marriott hotels executive, will reap the windfall when Northwest Airlines refloats on the stock market. In line for an equal profit is Gary Wilson, an ex-Marriott col-

league and a former Walt Disney finance director, although neither can sell their holding for another four years. The two men took Northwest private in a \$3.6 billion management buyout in 1989. But that move saddled Northwest with so much debt that it was only saved from filing for the protection of the bankruptcy courts last year by \$866 million of union wage concession and banks' willingness to extend repayments on \$4.53 billion of long term debt.

The original investment by Mr Checchi and Mr Wilson has been estimated at \$10 million each, although Northwest has declined to comment. But under the terms of the flotation to raise between \$400 million and \$460 million, each of them will get shares valued at \$242 million. The expected float price is \$20 a share. But analysts say they could still think themselves lucky to get it away at \$17, given that Northwest is coming to market with a negative book value of \$48.70 per share and shareholders' equity of minus \$1.96 billion.

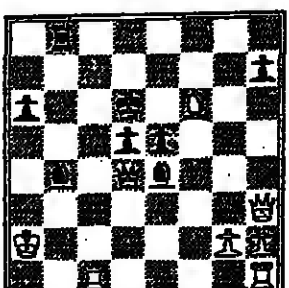


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Just released from Times Books. The Times Crosswords - Book 17. The Times Concise Crosswords - Book 5. The Sunday Times Crosswords - Book 12. £4.25 each (inc p&hp).

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene



Solution, page 23

This position is taken from the game Gurevich-Hennigan, at the Hastings Premier tournament, 1993.

The white king has been stripped bare and is at the mercy of the black forces. However, it is White's move and he gets in first. How does he do it?

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 70

ACROSS

- 5 Overindulgence (12)
- 8 Long metal pin for meat (6)
- 9 Associate: socialise (6)
- 10 Lebanese port: rubber product (4)
- 12 One following a trail (7)
- 14 Flightless black/white fish-eating bird (7)
- 15 Warm and cosy (4)
- 17 Burgundy: vegetable (6)
- 18 Naked (6)
- 20 Sudden dramatic advance (12)

DOWN

- 1 Gloved fielder (6-6)
- 2 Store (luggage, cargo) (4)
- 3 Italian city: type of fowl (7)
- 4 Fortified gate-tower (8)
- 6 Roman war-god (4)
- 7 Design of ballet movements (12)
- 11 Relating to major areas of country (8)
- 13 Speak text for typing (7)
- 16 Soft accent: rough edge after drilling (4)
- 19 Social or sporting association (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 69

ACROSS: 4 Bee 8 Undergo 9 Bravo 10 Maybe 11 Sincere 12 Gumption 14 Pour 15 Dove 16 Original 20 Cartoon 21 Elgin 23 Mecca 24 Lattice 25 Lee

DOWN: 1 Nutmeg 2 Edgy 3 Arrest 4 Bob's your uncle 5 Ebony 6 Cape Town 7 Honest 13 Maverick 15 Decamp 17 Ghetto 18 Lintel 19 Coral 22 Gait

WORD WATCHING

By Philip Howard

VERATRINE

- a. Glasslike
- b. A poisonous alkaloid
- c. An uncanonical creed

WOW-WOW

- a. An Ayrshire expression of pleasure
- b. A Chinese nanny
- c. A silver gibbon

HAYWARD

- a. The stackyard
- b. Towards the east
- c. A town officer

INCHPIN

- a. A floating hinge
- b. The target at curling
- c. Sweetbreads of a deer

Answers on page 23

OFT seeks views on TV airtime

By OUR DEPUTY CITY EDITOR

THE Office of Fair Trading will this week hear from the TV industry just how much work should be done to unwind the complex web of ownership of airtime sales operations that is delaying the £735 million takeover bid by Granada Group for LWT (foldings), the London weekend broadcaster.

Michael Heseltine, President of the Board of Trade, ruled last week that the bid could proceed providing undertakings came from Granada to reduce the combined companies' 41 per cent of Channel 3 airtime sales.

Gerry Robinson, Granada's chief executive, has already indicated willingness to comply with whatever the OFT judges to be necessary. The OFT has this week to ask the TV industry what it should demand, and Granada will therefore probably learn of its decision early next month, allowing the bid clock to be restarted in a fortnight. LWT is thought to have asked for this to happen immediately, and the Takeover Panel could rule on this today, but any decision is not expected to be in LWT's favour.

One option - most advantageous to Granada - would be to require it to operate Laser and the Time Exchange, the two main airtime sales businesses in which the company and LWT participate, as autonomous companies. But the OFT may require some unwinding of their ownership.

"La cession des 30% de BUT à des investisseurs pour 536.4 millions de francs a conforté le savoir faire de Kleinwort Benson dans les opérations de bought deal."

L'Agefi, 3.12.93

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December 1993